

THE FAVORITE

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THE GITANA.

Expressly translated for the FAVORITE from the French of Xavier de Montepin.

XXXIX.—Continued.

Morales drew back from the letter his sister held out to him as though it had been a rattlesnake on the point of springing at him.

"I!" he repeated three times in three different tones. "I indeed! no, no, no!"

"Do you refuse to do me this service?" asked Carmen.

"Such a service as that! Yes, decidedly I refuse!"

"Why so?"

"Why! By St. James of Compostella, that is a queer question! Because I have no wish to become your accomplice and to help in compromising you in a manner that must inevitably lead to our ruin!"

"So you prefer that I should employ one of the servants who will betray me, as you were saying just now. Do you think that my fortune, and consequently your own, will be more firmly assured by my placing myself at the mercy of a scoundrel to be ruckey who will sell my secrets to Oliver for a few pieces of gold?"

Morales scratched his head meditatively.

"What will the Marquis de Grancey think," he murmured, "at seeing a noble Spanish gentleman, such as Don Juan Morales y Tullio, Oliver Le Vallant's guest and confidential friend, forget himself so far as to consent to become the go-between from Oliver's wife to him? It would be an unworthy and ignoble part to play!"

"Do you consider the part you are playing here, in plundering your benefactor, less ignoble or less unworthy?"

"Hush! my dear sister. In the name of our Lady of Atocha, and of all the saints in Paradise, speak lower. What the deuce! I am toward—I do my work conscientiously."

"And I let you do as you please, therefore you should be grateful enough to help me when I need you."

"You certainly appeal most successfully to my feelings, and before very long I shall be unable to refuse you anything. But first of all must try once more to open your eyes to the danger you are about to incur. My poor unhappy Carmen, have you never reflected on the disastrous results to which this insane passion of yours must lead?"

"Never."

"Well, there is time yet. Stop before it is too late! Be prudent! Do not give your husband the right to insist on a separation, for a separation would be fatal to you."

"On the contrary," broke in Carmen, "it could be the saving of me!"

Morales stared in astonishment.

"Yes," insisted his sister, "the saving of me. Separation means happiness for me—happiness and wealth!"

"Wealth!" Morales re-echoed.

"Yes, wealth. Have you forgotten my dowry of two millions, of which it will be impossible to deprive me?"

"Have you forgotten the other two millions that remain with your husband? Two millions! It is sheer beggary when for the liking one has have fourteen!"

"My husband's fortune will never be mine. He is young and strong."

"What does that prove? Youth and strength are no preservatives against accident. Oliver is a thorough horseman, a good swimmer and extremely fond of hunting—three sources of danger already. He may be thrown from his horse, he may be drowned, or killed while hunting. And I leave out the chance of his being killed in a duel. For aught you know his days may be already numbered."

Carmen's eyes glistened. "You are right, Morales," she said after a pause; "twelve millions are worth some trouble. Fear nothing, I will take care of myself."

you. So you may be perfectly satisfied. You will win the Marquis's esteem, and will probably return with some more solid marks of his favor."

"Well, your word is enough, little sister," returned Morales, rubbing his hands expectantly. "You may count on my bringing back in person the Marquis's reply."

XL.

IN WHICH CARMEN AND OLIVER FALL OUT, BUT MORALES AND CARMEN ARE OF ONE MIND.

A month had passed since Morales had un-

on the wharf where the vessel lay in which he intended to sail.

On the morning of the third day he presented himself in his wife's apartments, much to her surprise.

"My dear Annunziata," he began, "could you spare me a few moments? I want to have a brief but serious conversation with you."

Carmen was not a little disturbed at her husband's words, but she was too good an actress to allow her countenance to betray the trouble she felt, and with a smiling countenance she gave her assent.

"Forgive me," continued Oliver, "if my words reopen an old wound. I would wish to spare you all painful emotion, but unfortunately that is impossible. I want to speak to you about your father."

Carmen trembled.

"I know how you loved that good man," he proceeded; "I know how bitterly you regret him. I too regret him bitterly. Don José and my father were as brothers to one another. Weep without constraint before me, Annunziata, for I can mingle my tears with yours."

Carmen bent her head, not to hide her tears, but to avoid meeting her husband's piercing gaze. A new and vague terror seized upon her. Her husband went on:

"My father owed everything to your father. So also your father owed everything to my father. On neither of the two did the debt of gratitude weigh heavy. You are as well acquainted as I am with my father's last and two fold promise to Don José Rovero. The first part of this promise related to you only, Annunziata, the last part concerned your father's fortune, which had been shattered by a succession of misfortunes. The first part of the promise has been kept; you are rich and bear an honored name. The time has now come for the acquittal of the second part of the promise. I think, and I believe that you will think with me, that I can not better prove my love and veneration for the memory of your father than by devoting myself body and mind to setting his affairs right. Instead, therefore, of sending an agent to Havana, I intend going myself."

"What!" cried Carmen, hardly able to conceal her joy. "You are going, Oliver?"

"When I say 'I am going,' I mean of course 'we are going,'" returned Oliver with a smile.

"We!" exclaimed Carmen in consternation.

"Do you intend taking me, then?"

"Certainly I do. I have no intention of leaving you behind."

"But it can not be!" cried Carmen wildly.

"Why not, pray?"

"The idea of such a long voyage is unbearable. The mere sight of a ship is enough to recall to my mind all the horrors of my last voyage."

"I can perfectly understand that such recollections are painful, yet it seems to me that they should give you confidence since the divine protection was so marvellously extended to you that you alone survived the shipwreck."

"Perhaps you are right, Oliver. But I am



"DE GRANCEY DROPPED HIS SWORD, HEAVED A DEEP SIGH AND FELL DEAD ON THE CARPET."

"And you will have nothing to say to the Marquis?"

"I do not promise that; but I will take all precautions possible, and as the secret is known only to us three, we may be sure that it will be well kept."

"So you insist," asked Morales with a sigh, "on my undertaking your commission?"

"I do, in our common interest. Our future success renders it necessary, and you know it as well as I."

The Gitano, convinced, but dissatisfied, shrugged his shoulders and took the letter.

"Have you any further commands for me?" he asked.

"One only. Go to the Marquis after night-fall. Of course you will take care to give the letter into his own hands. I have told him what the relations between us are."

"You don't mean to say that you told him that I am your brother?"

"I told him that you are an old friend of my father, that you have known me from my childhood; that you are absolutely devoted to me and that I have the most perfect confidence in

undertaken the errand to the Marquis de Grancey.

One day Oliver, instead of staying at home as had been his custom for some time past, betook himself to his counting-house, in which he had hardly set foot since his father's death. Here he spent the day in examining the books and in drawing up a statement of the condition of his business. He also provided himself with circular notes on the principal houses in Europe and America, issued powers of attorney to some of his nearest friends who were to act for him in his absence, and, in short, made all the necessary preparations for a long and extended voyage.

In the evening he returned to Ingouville. Carmen, whose guilty conscience had tormented her all day, was unable to remark any change in her husband's manner towards her, with the single exception of his contenting himself with taking her hand, instead of kissing it, as was his usual custom.

Two days passed without an incident worthy of notice. Oliver passed the whole of the time

only a poor weak woman, and you see the effect the mere thought of the voyage has upon me."

Carmen was indeed trembling like an aspen and large tears rolled down her cheeks.

"I am indeed sorry to see you in such a state, my dear Annunziata," said Oliver, "without being able to comfort and reassure you. I trust, however, that your unreasonable fears will leave you, and that on reflection you will be more calm. Bear in mind that you are about to assist in the accomplishment of your father's last wishes. Bear in mind too that you will be able to kneel at his tomb, where from above Don José Rovero and Philip Le Vaillant will look down upon you and bless you."

"Oliver," murmured Carmen entreatingly, "Oliver, I beseech you, give up the idea of taking me with you."

"I have said once already that I will not leave you behind."

"Then give up the idea of going."

"It is useless to hope such a thing. It must be undertaken and carried out."

"Oliver, you are cruel! You have no pity for me!"

"Am I cruel and pitiless because I refuse to leave you?"

"Then you have made up your mind?"

"Irrevocably."

Carmen dried her tears and drew herself up. An expression of firmness settled on her face.

"Very well," she said in a short, hard voice. "If your mind is made up, so is mine. If your will is unyielding, so shall mine be. I will not go."

Carmen expected that this declaration of war would be followed by a burst of rage from her husband. It was not, however.

"I think you are mistaken," was all Oliver said, with a quiet smile on his lips.

"Do you mean to say that you will make me go?"

"I shall do it very unwillingly; but do it I will."

"What! will you even use force?"

"Even use force if it is necessary."

With a cry of rage and a look of deadly hate Carmen started up and confronted her husband.

"Ah!" she cried, "you are dropping the mask at last! You never loved me! In your eyes I am not your wife! I am not your equal! I am your slave! Your slave whom you would drive about at the end of the lash!"

"The wife is the slave of her husband," said Oliver imperturbably, "both by the law of God and the law of man. It only depends on her to make her slavery very pleasant and happy."

Carmen said nothing. Her head was sunk on her breast. Oliver watched her pityingly.

"You are right," said the Gitano at last, raising her head. "The man is the stronger, and it is useless for his slave to rise against him. My rebellion just now was foolish. You have made me see that. It shall not occur again. I accept the part you would have me take. I have no longer any will of my own. I will do as you like. When shall we start?"

"To-morrow."

Carmen shivered. "You are very late in warning me," she said. "I have much to get ready for such a long voyage, and I shall hardly have time."

"You have the rest of the day before you and the whole of to-morrow, for we shall only sail when the tide is on the turn at ten in the evening. If your baggage is ready at eight it will be in plenty of time."

"Very well. Then I am free until to-morrow evening?"

"You are always free."

"Like the slave," retorted Carmen bitterly, "with a chain at his ankle and his master's brand on his shoulder."

Oliver made no answer. With a smile he bowed to his wife and left the room.

"Well," murmured Carmen when she was alone, "the die is cast. It only remains to act. After all it will be his doing."

So saying she struck two blows on a small gong that stood on the table. A waiting-woman made her appearance.

"Tell Don Guzman," said the mistress, "that I wish to see him immediately."

In a few moments Morales entered the room. He found his sister seated at a small table where she was writing with feverish haste.

"Wait," she said without stopping, "I have finished."

Two papers lay before her. One she placed in her bosom, the other she folded in the form of a letter. Then rising she turned to Morales.

"Santa Maria!" cried the Spaniard, "you are as pale as death! What is the matter?"

"The matter is, my poor Morales, that we are lost!"

"Lost!" cried the Gitano in consternation.

"Almost without hope."

"Has your husband discovered everything?"

"That would be nothing."

"What could be worse?"

"Oliver goes away to-morrow and takes me with him."

"Whither?"

"To Havana."

"To Havana!" exclaimed Morales clasping his hands. "Mercy! You are right, we are indeed lost."

"If the voyage were to take place," continued Carmen, "Oliver would know the whole truth an hour after we landed. He would have no pity for me, the false Annunziata. He would give me up to justice, and I should spend the rest of my days in prison."

"And even," put in Morales, "if Oliver were to be satisfied with turning you out of the house,

you would be sure to fall into the clutches of that tiger Quirino."

"You see what a dreadful situation we are in."

"Alas, yes. But is there no way of preventing the voyage?"

"None. I have begged, entreated, implored in vain. Oliver is inflexible."

"What do you intend doing?"

"I have two projects."

"What are they?"

Carmen handed Morales the paper folded in letter-form. "This is the first," she said.

"What is this?" asked Morales.

"A letter that you must take to the Marquis de Grancey. I must see him, and tell him all. He can save me."

"Oliver will follow you."

"Bah! The Marquis can easily hide me in Paris. He is a powerful nobleman, and can easily throw the police off the scent, if there is any chase."

"Very fine, but would he agree to do so?"

"He would."

"Supposing he were to refuse?"

"I have a second means of escape."

"What is that?"

"Death."

"Suicide!" exclaimed the Spaniard horror-stricken.

"What else could I do?"

"You would not have the courage to do it when the time came."

"I am sure I should. Besides I count on you to help me."

"You count on me, you unhappy girl! Do you suppose I would take your life?"

"No. Do not be afraid, it is not that I want of you."

"What then, pray?"

"I know that you are acquainted with certain poisons which do their work without giving pain."

Morales shook his head decidedly.

"Do not deny it, Morales," continued his sister. "I have heard you scores of times brag of your skill in toxicology. You would do me a great service in getting me one of these poisons."

"Don't think of it! Anything else but that!"

"Do you refuse?"

"I do, distinctly."

"For what reason?"

"The best reason of all. You are my sister after all. A brother cannot help his sister to kill herself—it's against nature!"

"So you have your scruples, eh?"

"Indeed I have."

"You, Morales! You who in Havana wanted to assassinate Quirino!"

"Bah! Quirino was not my brother! Caramba, I am a man like any other! There is something in blood after all!"

"So this then is what prevents you from helping me?"

"It is."

"In that case I will show you how to get rid of your scruples."

"I can't believe you."

"You shall see."

Carmen drew out the paper she had placed in her bosom and handed it to her brother.

"Read," she said.

Morales unfolded the paper and read as follows:

"My last will and testament.

"I give and bequeath to Senor Don Guzman Morales y Tulipano, as an acknowledgment of his life-long devotion, the two million livres I now possess and which were settled on me by the terms of my marriage contract.

"ANNUNZIATA LE VAILLANT.

"Havre, the 23rd Day of August, 1771."

Carmen remarked that her brother's eyes glistened with cupidity.

"Well, brother," she asked triumphantly, "are two million livres a sum large enough to induce you to overcome your scruples?"

"Sister," returned the Gitano with some embarrassment, "I have always loved money, I confess, but there are circumstances in which millions even lose their power. In the present case my conscience does not allow me to bestow a thought on my own interests."

Carmen shrugged her shoulders.

"Your conscience!" she cried mockingly.

"Don't come and talk to me about your conscience. Nonsense! You are playing a useless comedy. You think you can blind me with an appearance of disinterestedness in which you know I do not believe. In a word you only want to be persuaded to yield. So be it, I will persuade—and what is more, convince you. Think now, Morales; if I make up my mind to die it is only because it is impossible for me to live any longer. Remember too that that resolution is fixed, nothing can shake it. I will sooner plunge a knife into my heart than undertake this voyage to Havana. If I had no knife I would throw myself into the sea or dash my brains out against a wall. You see I am determined. You will, then, commit no crime in procuring me the poison I ask for; you will be doing a good action, perhaps the only good action of your lifetime. You will be rendering my death easy, not putting me to death. If you insist in your refusal, I will tear up this will. To-morrow you will have no sister and no two millions to console you for her loss. Now, be reasonable. You will not be doing what I ask for the sake of the money, but through pity for me and to spare my sufferings."

Morales made no reply. He was busy wiping imaginary tears from his eyes.

"Well," said Carmen at last, persuasively, "are we agreed?"

"Alas!" murmured Morales with a deep sigh; "you are irresistible."

"Then you consent?"

"How can I refuse you?"

"You will give a sure poison?"

"A sure, painless poison, that will kill without fail; and withal such a poison as I would take myself were I in a strait such as this."

"And you will prepare it to-day?"

"I suppose I must, you are in such a hurry."

"When will you give it me?"

"This evening."

"After all, Morales, you are a good brother, and I am glad to know that after I am gone my two millions will fall into your hands."

Morales again wiped his eyes.

"Carmen," he cried in a pathetic tone, "don't speak of that money. You break my heart! Don't speak of it!"

And he added, without changing his tone:

"Are you quite sure, my poor sister, that the will will hold good?"

"I will answer for it," replied Carmen with a smile; "and I will give it you in exchange for the poison."

"Heaven grant," said Morales piously, "that I may never use it. I will first go to the Marquis with your letter and then—alas! alas!—I'll see about the poison."

XLI.

THE LAST MEETING.

Rather surprised at receiving a letter from Carmen asking an interview which was to take place only on the next day, George de Grancey suspected that something had gone wrong in the household of Le Vaillant.

The almost illegible character of the handwriting showed him that a feverish hand had traced the lines.

The Marquis discreetly questioned Morales. The Gitano was reserved and prudent in his replies. Indeed, he affirmed that he knew nothing.

"I have noticed, however, that our dear Annunziata is more preoccupied and thoughtful than usual, but I ignore the reasons of the change."

George informed Morales that from midnight he would wait for Carmen at the little house.

Morales lost not one moment on the way.

He went to all the druggists and apothecaries of the city.

In each shop, he bought strange substances; he had them ground to powder, weighed and carefully labelled.

When these purchases were made, he obtained from a glass dealer, two very small phials of unequal size, and he then repaired to the tavern of the *Silver Anchor*, where he had spent some days on his first arrival in Havre.

There he asked for a room, and ordered a coffee pot of new brass, and a brazier full of live coals.

He bolted the door, opened the window partially and devoted himself to certain concoctions of which we shall know more and more directly.

While this was going on, Carmen pretended to be making active preparations for departure. Large boxes were open under her eyes, and into these the chambermaids were packing linen.

A little before the supper hour, Oliver came to inquire about his wife. Carmen received him as usual, seeming to harbor no resentment against him for what took place in the morning.

Morales came in after supper and demanded to be received by his sister.

An affirmative answer was immediately given.

"What news?" asked the young woman, running to meet her brother.

"I saw the Marquis."

"His answer?"

"He will wait."

"Very well. Did he appear surprised?"

"A little. Surprised and uneasy."

"Did he question you?"

"Yes. But I thought it prudent not to answer him."

"You did right. I will be grateful for this. But this is not all. Is the poison ready?"

"It is ready."

"You have it with you?"

"Yes."

"Give it to me."

"Carmen, my sister, reflect."

"I have reflected. My mind is made up. A fight with George or death. Give me the poison."

Morales drew from his pocket a little phial, which Carmen seized with avidity and examined carefully.

It was half filled by a transparent liquor, resembling burned topaz and looking like Spanish wine.

"Well," said she, "this is death?"

"A pistol ball or a sword thrust is not more sure in its action."

"Is it instantaneous?"

"No. It requires two hours to work."

"What are the symptoms?"

"In the first half hour, no symptoms; then a calm sleep."

"Next?"

"Next? Why there is no awakening. That's all."

"How many drops are required to ensure death?"

"The dose which the bottle contains is not too strong."

"Are you certain it is sufficient?"

"Certain."

"Even for a man?"

"Yes, for a man," said Morales, astonished, and he added:

"Why that question?"

Carmen looked at him.

"Ah! I understand," he said, "I never thought of it before. The poison is not meant for you. It is for your husband. That is right; I approve you."

"Thank you."

"Oliver has no family. He has written no will. You will be his heir-at-law. We shall have fourteen millions to-morrow, if your hand trembles not."

"My hand will be firm. I do not desire the death of Oliver. It is George who will decide. If George carries me off, Oliver will live and I will not touch a hair of his head, for all his millions. But if I must do it, to save myself, I will kill him without hesitation or remorse."

"Admirable!" exclaimed Morales, "and I now, my dear sister, I will make you a present."

Saying which, he drew from his pocket a second phial filled with a liquid of emerald blue.

"This is an antidote," said he.

"Thanks."

"At your service, sister."

"At midnight you will conduct me to George's house?"

"I will not fail."

XLII.

THE LAST MEETING.

At nine o'clock, the Marquis repaired to the little house and there he waited.

At midnight, three light raps were heard on the door, and Carmen entered, trembling and pale.

"Annunziata, my darling," he exclaimed.

"What ails you?"

"A great peril besets me!"

"What is it?"

"They want to part us."

De Grancey was thrilled.

"My husband wants to take me on a long voyage which will last for months and years. To leave you, George, were death. I have not the courage to do it. To-morrow, when the vessel sets sail, I shall be with you, or in the cold winding sheet. I have a poison with me. I will use it."

De Grancey listened to Carmen as we sometimes listen to strange voices in dreams.

"Well, my beloved, we will not be separated. But tell me all, that I may know how to act."

She told him all.

He reflected; then took a resolution. He would carry her off; take her to Paris, where she could be hidden from the pursuits of Oliver.

"You consent to deliver me?" said Carmen.

"With all my soul."

"And we shall never part?"

"Never."

It was then agreed that at four o'clock, a chaise should be waiting on the outskirts of the town, to take her to Paris.

The interview closed. Carmen went off to finish her preparations for departure.

The Marquis remained in the hut for a time. At the end of a few moments, a knocking was heard at the door. He opened.

It was Oliver.

XLIII.

GOD DISPOSES.

"Marquis, my visit surprises you," said Le Vaillant, "but be assured that I know all."

"Sir, Madame Le Vaillant is innocent."

"No explanations, please."

"What do you expect of me?"

"A reparation."

"It is just. You shall have it."

"Thank you."

"Name the conditions."

"We shall fight with swords until death."

"Where?"

"Here."

"When?"

"At once."

"But, sir?"

"Have you any objections?"

"No witnesses."

"I have provided for that. Will you have the goodness to furnish me a slip of paper?"

The paper was furnished and Oliver wrote,

"Before the combat, I declare that I fall in a fair duel and my last wish is that my loyal adversary be not molested."

Oliver signed the paper.

The Marquis wrote a similar declaration and signed it.

"Are you ready now, sir?" asked Oliver.

"Perfectly."

The two swords leaped from their scabbards.

JOHN JANKIN'S SERMON.

The minister said last night, says he,
 "Don't be afraid of giving;
 If your life ain't nothin' to other folks,
 Why, what's the use o' livin'?"
 And that's what I say to wife, says I,
 "There's Brown, the mis'rable sinner,
 He'd sooner a beggar would starve than give
 A cent toward buyin' a dinner."

I tell you our minister's prime, he is,
 But I couldn't quite determine,
 When I heard him a-givin' it right and left,
 Just who was hit by his sermon.
 Of course there couldn't be no mistake
 When he talked of long-winded prayin',
 For Peters and Johnson they sot and scowled
 At every word he was sayin'.

And the minister he went on to say,
 "There's various kinds o' cheatin',
 And religion's as good for every day.
 As it is to bring to meetin'."
 I don't think much of a man that gives
 The Lord Amens at my preachin',
 And spends his time the following week
 In cheatin' and overreachin'."

I guess that dose was bitter enough
 For a man like Jones to swallow;
 But I noticed he didn't open his mouth,
 Not once, after that, to holler.
 Hurrah, says I, for the minister—
 Of course I said it quiet—
 Give us some more of this open talk,
 It's very refreshing diet.

The minister hit 'em every time;
 And when he spoke of fashion;
 And a-riggin' out in bows and things,
 As women's rullin' passion,
 And a-comin' to church to see the styles,
 I couldn't help a-winkin'
 And a-nudgin' my wife, and says I, "That's
 you."
 And I guess it sot her thinkin'.

Says I to myself, "That sermon's pat,
 But man is a queer creation,
 And I'm much afraid that most of the folks
 Won't take the application."
 Now if he had said a word about
 My personal mode of sinnin',
 I'd have gone to work to right myself
 And not set here a-grinnin'.

Just then the minister says, says he,
 "And now I've come to the fellers
 Who've lost this shower by usin' their friends
 As sort o' moral umbrellas.
 Go home," says he, "and find your faults,
 Instead of huntin' your brothers';
 Go home," he says, "and wear the coats,
 You've tried to fit for others."

My wife she nudged, and Brown he winked,
 And there was lots o' smilin',
 And lots o' lookin' at our pew;
 It set my blood a-billin'.
 Says I to myself, "Orr minister
 Is gettin' a little bitter;
 I'll tell him when meetin's out, that I
 Ain't at all that kind of a critter."

A LOVE AVENGED.

"Yes, Mr. Pierce Egremont, you may sit
 there as cold and superciliously as you please,
 but for all that I do not leave this room till I
 get an answer to the errand that brought me
 here."

"Really, my good woman, you distress me,"
 returned the beau, negligently. "Nothing is
 so painful to a man of fine feelings as to have
 to say coarsely what I think you ought to
 understand by my implied silence. I have
 never promised your pretty Aline to marry her.
 I know her to be a very good and lovely girl,
 and laid up sick as I was for three weeks in
 your pretty cottage in the country, I may cer-
 tainly have told her so. Under the circum-
 stances you must, I think, allow that was ad-
 missible. As for anything further, I deny it
 altogether. A delightful creature she was, cer-
 tainly, so much innocence, and candor, and art-
 less simplicity. I am so sorry to hear she is so
 ill, but I cannot lay the flattering unction to my
 heart that I am the cause of it. You do not
 agree with me? My dear woman, if you were
 to know the world as I do, I should not need to
 inform you that these little passing fancies and
 affections never mean anything serious. They
 are sent to us as distractions for the moment,
 and like the flowers of earth soften for us the
 nakedness of the hard road we poor scholars
 have to travel over."

"Good evening to you, Mr. Pierce Egremont,"
 interrupted his visitor, rising up before
 him, red and wrathful in her righteous indignation.
 "I came here, sir, prepared to find you
 vacillating, vain, and supercilious—in fact, I
 came prepared to find you a fool; but I have
 had to deal with a cold-blooded villain instead.
 Neither I nor my daughter, sir, shall ever trouble
 you further."

"But, my good woman," began Pierce Egremont.
 It was all in vain; he was only speaking to
 empty air.

Meanwhile, out through the fresh spring air,
 with the hedges putting forth their tender leaves
 the mother of Aline Worthy passed like an em-
 bodied thunderstorm.

"What did he say, dear mother?" asked the
 poor girl, raising herself painfully up from the
 low couch in the little cottage parlor, on which
 she lay reclined. "It seems such an age since
 you left, and I am sure I am very much worse.
 I thought at one time I should have died before
 you got back. Was he sorry to hear of my ill-
 ness? Did he promise he would come and see
 me?"

"Yes, darling!—yes!" faltered the unhappy
 mother, her anger all gone, and misery alone
 prominent, as she saw that dread change already
 on her child's face, and knew not how soon her
 angel would call for her. "Yes, darling!—yes!
 He was very sorry—so sorry, he would hardly
 believe me."

"And he will come to-morrow?"

"Oh, to-morrow, certainly. So now you will
 lie down and take a little rest—will you not?
 There, rest your head on my shoulder, and I
 will read, or talk, or sit quietly beside you."

"Not so, dear mother. All those things are
 over for me now. I only want your hand in
 mine, and your prayers for my poor, wearing,
 departing soul."

The long, terrible night is passing over at last
 amid faintings, death damps, and exhaustion,
 and the cry of the heart-broken mother, that
 more may not be laid upon her than she is able
 to bear; but still it is passing over, and day-
 light shows her face, bright and rosy, at the cot-
 tage window.

"I wish he would come; do go and fetch him
 mother," sighs the restless girl. "But no; I might
 be dead before you returned. I must wait still
 —wait in patience and hope."

She whispers to her mother "that Pierce is
 here; that she knew he would come; that she
 might raise her up higher in the bed to receive
 him, for already he is in the next room;" and
 as with a mighty effort the poor mother complies
 with this request, the Angel of Death stoops
 down, and lifts the worn spirit high up, even to
 heaven.

"What a night it has been!" said Pierce
 Egremont, to himself, as he sat at his late break-
 fast the next morning. "If one were super-
 stitious one could fancy evil influences had been
 abroad, the wind shrieked and howled so des-
 perately; and once, when it lulled, I was al-
 most sure I heard the church bell tolling. It is
 strange what one can fancy lying wide awake
 at night! They say 'Conscience makes cowards
 of us all;' and though I do not own yet that I
 behaved badly to Aline Worthy, yet, strange to
 say, I could not get her out of my head all night.
 I will send over this morning and hear how she
 is; I ought to have done so yesterday, but I did
 not like to ask my fellow to turn out in such
 weather. Here, you Martin, pull up the blind
 —do you hear?—and let me get all the sunshine
 I can. You can just bring in the paper, and
 then I shall want you to go over to Mrs. Wor-
 thy's with my compliments, and—what is that
 you are saying, fellow?—that Miss Worthy died
 yesterday morning! It is very unfortunate!"
 he keeps repeating to himself at intervals;
 "poor girl, if I could only have divined the
 truth, I should have acted so differently."

We have not done with Pierce Egremont;
 but now that you see him again, you will notice
 that his hair is thin, and slightly tinged with
 grey; that there are tell-tale wrinkles at the
 corners of his eyes, and his upright form is ever
 so little drooped. Scarcely a score of summers
 since we saw him last, but they have not passed
 over him lightly. He had now subsided into
 his proper position (so he assures himself) as a
 bachelor landowner. He is the great man of the
 parish, the principal magistrate in the country
 and the largest landed proprietor. Wherever
 he goes he is flattered, courted, and caressed.
 He knows just the value of all these things; but
 he smiles blandly all the same, and puts people
 into good temper by letting them believe they
 have deceived him. In fact, he has all the
 world can give, except love—and that he does
 not care for. "It might have been different
 once," he tells himself with a sigh sometimes,
 as visions of Aline in her white robes and low-
 toned voice, flit past him; "but that was when
 he was comparatively poor, and might have
 been loved for himself. 'The thing is impossible
 now, and—well, he does not require it.'"

Thoughts similar to these were flitting
 through his mind one day, when a letter was
 put into his hand from an old college friend of
 earlier days. The man had married, and passed
 away from his circle of life long ago. He had
 gone into the Church, and if he ever thought of
 him at all, it was as vegetating in some out-
 of-the-way parish, dragged down by a wife and
 family of children, and looking, most likely, on
 his college experiences as days when he was
 fast bound in sin and iniquity. Now, this letter
 came to him from his friend's death-bed. It
 told him that he had lost his wife years ago,
 that she had left one child, a daughter, who was
 everything to him on earth, but that now he
 was going to be taken away from her. He had
 caught cold, which had brought on inflammation
 of the lungs, and his doctor did not conceal from
 him that he was sinking rapidly. He would
 fain see him, and place his Ruth under his care
 before she became an orphan. He would have
 written to him before, having full confidence in
 him, only he was ignorant of his address. He
 had found it now, and should die happy, for he
 knew how quickly Pierce would obey his sum-
 mons—the letter ending with, "From your
 friend, who loves you, Paul Horton."

It is two days after this that Pierce enters the
 little gate that leads up to his friend's cottage.

Old memories must be strong in Pierce Egremont,
 breaking up all the harsh lines of his fea-
 tures, for he does not seem altered in the eyes
 of poor Paul Horton. He stands alone with him
 now in the shadowed room, and he fights with
 difficulty for his breath. He repeats again the
 substance of his letter, and begs him, by their
 old boyish love, to take charge of his daughter.
 And Pierce promises, defiant of himself as he
 does so, not recognizing even yet the voice of
 the heart speaking to him through that one
 word. Then Paul calls for her. She enters softly,
 and with child-like grace, clouds of dark hair
 hanging over her white dress, and her blue eyes
 swollen and disfigured with much weeping. Paul
 smiles as he sees her. Placing once more with-
 in his friend's that small velvety palm that had
 before led him up the stairs, he bids her love
 him as her father's friend. Then he tries to tell
 Pierce something that concerns her, but the
 hard, dry cough breaks in upon his voice, and he
 struggles vainly with his expiring breath. He
 motions to them to raise him up in their arms,
 but sinks backwards even as they do so. A few
 more painful moments, and all is over; and
 there, in the still room, Pierce Egremont find-
 himself trying to comfort the poor weeping girl
 with assurances of how she shall be cared for,
 and how she must love him, for had he not been
 loved by her father?

"This thing has been forced upon me. It is
 in no way of my own seeking." This sapient
 remark Pierce Egremont has repeated to him-
 self very many times during the twelvemonth
 Ruth Horton has spent under his roof. It has
 been his excuse for discovering that no fingers,
 save her own small ones, are to be trusted for
 dusting his papers and arranging his books in
 his study. It has caused him to allow her
 work-table and flower-stand to be established
 in the bay window, where he tells her she is
 welcome to sit as long as she does not disturb
 him by talking. It has given a social tendency
 to his meals, and has made him wonder how
 he ever sat down to food in solitary state before.
 It has been an object to an otherwise self-con-
 tained and dreary life; and he does not know
 which is the greatest pleasure—buying pretty
 things for Ruth, or seeing her enjoyment over
 them. It has been so natural for her to be loved
 and petted all her life long, that she sees no-
 thing strange in this, nor is Pierce himself
 aware of this construction put upon his conduct
 by the outer world, till a kind friend takes upon
 herself to let him know it. He is too much of a
 philosopher to be surprised. He saddles himself
 with an old duenna in the shape of a companion
 for Ruth, who, at the same time represents the
 proprieties, and drifts back again into his old
 happy life with her. She has discarded, by this
 time, her mourning for her father, and there is
 at times something in the gentle face and the
 white dress that reminds him strangely of Aline
 Worthy. "But Ruth shall never meet a fate
 like hers," he tells himself. She shall never
 know of love, jealousy, or heart-burnings. Next
 summer they shall travel together, and he will
 show her the wonders of the world; and in the
 winter they will come back to the old home;
 and so as time flows on they will go down the
 stream together, he growing younger in her
 sweet presence, and she gathering wisdom,
 without age, from his more mature experience.
 "But what when the time comes for me to mar-
 ry and leave you, guardian?" says Ruth; and
 in those few simple words the scales fell from
 Pierce Egremont's eyes, and he discovers that
 he loves her.

With dinner over and Ruth seated on a low
 stool in his study by the fire, the duenna hav-
 ing done to bed with a sick headache, the sus-
 pense became too mighty for him, and Pierce
 spoke out.

"Have I vexed you, darling?" he said, gen-
 tly, and as he lifted the sweet face that had
 dropped downwards, he saw it was pale and tear-
 stained, while in a low voice she begged him to
 listen to her. "Speak on," said poor Pierce,
 for there was something in her petition that seemed
 to strike straight at his heart, taking away
 from it all the light, and love, and sunshine he
 had nurtured there.

"Have patience with me, dear guardian.
 There was once a poor child who was left des-
 titute in the world, with but one man to care for
 her. She was his little ewe lamb. She lay
 within his bosom, and the lives of these two
 were garnered up in each other. It was not till
 she had attained to seventeen years that they
 had a thought apart; then the only companion
 of her childhood—the squire's son—(or so, at
 least, imagined the fanciful girl) changed to her.
 You will see she could not well have known her
 own heart, guardian, when I tell you that she
 questioned him—the young man just entering
 Oxford, why he was so cold to her. It was—as
 perhaps you will have guessed—not coldness,
 but a discovery of his own love that has changed
 him; and when they had once spoken on this
 subject, he would not let the girl go without her
 assurance that his love was returned. That was
 the first time she felt the loss of a mother. It is
 so difficult to speak of the inner heart, even to
 one's own father. I think, though, he suspected
 the girl's secret, for his kindness to her increased,
 and I knew that he and the young man's father
 were closeted together for a long time. Then
 Henry went to college, and the girl would have
 found it very dull, only that a new and terrible
 sorrow swept away all other thoughts, for her
 dear father sickened unto death. When he found
 the end approaching, he wrote to his old friend
 who loved him so dearly, and he came and was
 with him to the last. I think the sick man would

have told him of Henry Digby, only death was
 too swift for him. So the poor girl went away
 with this new friend, and he became in every
 way a second father to her. You know, guardian
 mine, how he petted and indulged her, laying
 aside all his own stateliness, and letting the poor
 child just creep into his heart. He could not tell
 the girl's history, though, for she kept it back
 from him—not from want of confidence, dear
 guardian, oh, no—nor of love, she is sure. It was
 just a little foolish fluttering nervousness of her
 own. And so, not knowing this story, and
 feeling how fond he had made the girl
 of him, and that it would pain her as much
 as it would himself should they ever be sepa-
 rated, he, in his generous heart, persuaded
 himself that this was love, and so, stooping
 from his high estate, he offered even to marry
 this poor, silly Ruthie. Guardian, dear guardian,
 you are not angry with me, are you?" concluded
 the girl, as, looking up, she saw Pierce's white
 face, and felt his hand grow cold and dead in her
 clasp. "Oh, don't be angry with me, dear, dear
 guardian!" she continued, piteously; "or you
 will break my heart. Only tell me what I can
 do for you."

"Nothing, nothing!" said poor Pierce, try-
 ing vainly to retain his composure. "I am
 not angry with you, little Ruthie. Not angry at
 all, poor child!" he added, more gravely, "only
 perhaps just a little sorry."

But Ruth's troubles are not yet over. Sobbing
 herself to sleep like a very child, she goes down
 next morning with a heavy heart to meet
 her guardian; but Pierce Egremont is not
 there.

"He left early for town," says the old house-
 keeper, "and there is a note left in his study
 for you, Miss Horton."

Poor Ruth! How scared she looks, and how
 she trembles before she opens the missive, and
 yet it only contains these words: "I have
 business that calls me up to town, my dear
 Ruth, and I am not sorry for it; as we old
 people do not easily relinquish our dreams of
 happiness. I love you just as much as ever,
 Ruthie, though I know you never can be mine.
 It is not that—but I fear I could not help pain-
 ing you did I remain, by showing you how unphilo-
 sophical I am over losing you. I shall not come
 back, therefore, till I have quite regained the
 mastery over myself."

And this is all Ruth's confidence has brought
 her. The girl sits down in her guardian's chair
 in the study, and as a large lump rises in her
 throat, the quiet tears assert themselves, and
 so she weeps.

Meanwhile Pierce is speeding forward on his
 journey. All through that time, after Ruth had
 told him her simple story, the two spirits of
 good and evil had waged fierce conflict in his
 heart. But love is of God; and He that hath
 begun a good work in us can continue it even
 unto the end. And so it was that love conquered
 at last, while self sacrifice stepped forward and
 placed her seal on the compact.

It was early morning before that conflict was
 over, and as he dropped off into a quiet sleep,
 Aline seemed to stand before him in "the
 snowy robe of her woman's crown," as bending
 down with a smile, she impressed a kiss upon
 his brow. This vision haunted and consoled him
 during all the long hours of his tedious journey.

He was going down once more to Ruth's
 home, the same man and yet how different! It
 almost seemed a dream to him as he drew up at
 the door of Squire Digby's house, and, sending
 in his card, requested an interview with his
 son, should he happen to be at home.

These two men, so different in age, and yet so
 close in heart in their affections, never spoke
 outwardly to others of what then passed between
 them; but it was noticed that when Pierce
 came out from the audience, though he looked
 pale, he was still firm and composed, whilst
 young Digby's eyes were full of tears, and the
 muscles of his face quivered with emotion. "I
 will go down with you with pleasure, sir, and
 God bless you for your goodness!" were his last
 words as they parted at the door; and the next
 morning early a chaise might be seen in waiting,
 and as young Digby stepped into it, the two men
 were whirled off swiftly in the direction of
 London. Here spending a night, they proceeded
 the next day to Pierce's old house, where Ruth
 still keeps watch for his return. "Come back
 to you cured at last, Ruthie," he says; "and
 now you must give me one kiss before I take
 you in to see an old friend."

Strangely altered man that he is when this
 reflection is a pleasure to him! "Thanks, Aline,"
 he whispers, aside; then turning round frankly
 and kindly to where the two lovers are still
 standing together: "You are sure I am not
 angry now, Ruthie," he says; "only don't thank
 me too much; for I have considered myself in
 this matter, and Digby has promised me that
 when you marry you will both still continue to
 live with me. So you see, Ruthie, I am not at
 all angry; and I don't think, now, I am even
 sorry!"—*From Colburn's New Monthly Magazine.*

ASTHMA.—DR. AD. D'EVOT (*Rev. de Thérap.*)
 gives some directions as to the remedies to be
 used in asthma. Twelve grammes of flowers of
 sulphur, with one gramme of tartarized antimo-
 ny, are mixed with honey and powdered gum,
 and divided into sixty pills. Three of these re-
 present the dose of Debreyne's powders, and one
 pill is given morning and evening. Morning and
 evening a sheet of nitre paper may be burned in
 the bedroom or alcove of the patient. The paper
 may be prepared of white filter paper, dipped
 in a solution of nitre in the proportion of a
 drachm to an ounce.

THE OLD COUPLE.

They sat in the sun together,
Till the day was almost done;
And then at its close an angel
Stepped over the threshold stone.
He folded their hands together,
He touched their eyelids with balm,
And their last breath floated upward
Like the close of a solemn psalm.
Like a bridal pair they traversed,
The unseen, mystical road,
That leads to the beautiful city
Whose Builder and Maker is God.

Perhaps, in that miracle country,
They will give her her lost youth back,
And the flowers of a vanished spring
Shall bloom in the spirit's track.
But the shapes they left behind them,
The wrinkles and silver hair—
Made sacred to us by the kisses
The angel imprinted there—
We'll hide away in the meadow,
When the sun is low in the west,
Where the moonbeams cannot find them,
Nor the wind disturb their rest.
But we'll let no tell-tale stone
With its age and date arise
O'er the two who are old no longer
In their Father's house in the skies.

THE STORY OF ESTELLA
MAYNE.

IN A LETTER TO A FRIEND.

BY ESTELLA LAWSON.

MY DEAR LAURA.

I believe I told you that my mother died when I was quite young. It was after this that our family troubles began—on our having to leave our house in the country, which, if my memory serves me rightly, was a handsome one, surrounded by gardens and meadows, with signs on all sides of the occupant being a man of some consequence; and on our removing to poor lodgings in London. How I can recall the sad sensations with which I used to sit at the windows of our rooms, and look out upon the dreary dirty streets, comparing them with my past home, the memory of whose pleasantness was present with me for a long while after our social disaster! We kept no servant. The woman of the house was kind to us; and though we were put to sad shifts, we were not in actual want. I had been in this house many months, when the landlady suggested to my father that I should be sent to school. He complied with the suggestion; and so to school I went. During the time of our prosperity I had had a governess who had cultivated my taste for music; and it was with no small pleasure, upon my entering the schoolroom of my new governess, that I saw an open piano. My father had accompanied me to Mrs. Grainger's; and at his request, I played. Mrs. Grainger spoke delightfully of the promise I gave of playing with skill. I was finally committed to her care; and for two or three years made what progress I could. My happiest hours were spent at this piano, and the cultivation of my musical taste became a matter of supreme pleasure to me.

I think I must have been at Mrs. Grainger's three years, when, on returning to our lodgings, which were in the next street, I found a gentleman with papa, whom I never remember having seen before, but whose name, when my father mentioned it, seemed familiar to me.

"This is Mr. Lawson, dear; you have often heard me speak of him," said my father.—"Ah, Lawson, you did not expect to see me come to this, did you, in the old days?"

Instead of replying at once to these remarks, Mr. Lawson, who was a short, stout, middle-aged man, and, as I then thought, rather pompous in his manner, held out his hand, and said:

"What is your name, little girl?"

"Estella."

"Ah, a singular name—a very singular name. I prefer simpler names myself. And how old are you?"

"Ten, sir."

"An impressionable age. Well, little Estella, I and your father have been talking about many things, and, amongst them, of your future welfare. He tells me that you are a little girl of talents; and I am very glad to hear it, and trust you will put those talents to the best advantage. If I hadn't put my talents to the best advantage, where do you think I should be now? I should be like there is no disguising it—your unfortunate father."

"Don't speak of the past, Lawson. It is bad enough for me to have to remember it. I have been confoundedly unfortunate; and I don't see that I was the only one to blame."

"You were unfortunate—I admit it. And you may be sure, Mayne, if I were not thoroughly satisfied that many of your misfortunes were not of your own seeking, I should not be willing to render you the assistance which I am now prepared to do.—Now, little Estella, I will tell you something of what has been passing between your father and myself. I have been offering to give him some assistance; and it was agreed

between us, that if I were to relieve him of the care of you—your living, your education—in addition to some other favors to be conferred upon himself, the nature of which I have not yet resolved on, I might be conferring a favor on him, which he may—he may, I say—claim at my hands. If I owe a man a debt, I like to pay it. It has been my principle through life. If it had not been, where do you think I should be now?"

Being unable to answer him, I held my tongue.

"I have lately become very prosperous, Miss Estella. After years of patient industry I have become rich. When I and your father began life twenty years ago, he was a wealthy man and I was a poor man. Ahem! our positions are—inscrutable are the ways of Providence!—at the present instant reversed."

I went to the side of papa, and looked, I believe, rebukingly at Mr. Lawson.

"Your father," resumed Mr. Lawson, "tells me that you have considerable musical talent, and as you will have to rely upon your resources for obtaining a livelihood, it is well that this musical talent should be cultivated in as great a measure as possible—of which there is little probability at the school where you are at present receiving your education. I propose, therefore, to place you at another establishment, where your abilities, if they are as great as your father has represented them to me, will have every chance of development; and it is my intention to bear the whole expense of your future education, which will be of a very superior kind. When you have been sufficiently trained in various branches of education at the establishment where I purpose placing you, you will be qualified for the position of governess. And I shall not be niggardly in my expenditure. You look grateful and surprised—and I do not wonder at it. But you will remember what I told you about my readiness always to pay a debt; and, in a measure, I am paying a debt now. Your father was good enough to assist me in business, when I first entered it a good many years ago, by a loan (I don't say it was a large one), by means of which I was enabled to make a start; and although I paid this loan back as soon as ever I was in a position to do so, with very handsome interest, I have never forgotten that act of kindness on your father's part, and wish now to do him a kindness in return. Accident separated us for a good many years, and it is only lately that we have been brought together again. Now, little Estella, what have you to say to my proposal with regard to yourself?"

I was delighted. To be thoroughly educated had been the hope of my young life; and to become skilful in music had long been a passion, which Mrs. Grainger's piano and Mrs. Grainger's tuition had promised slender means of gratification. I throbbed from head to foot with pleasure. Mr. Lawson patronisingly patted my head.

"And when am I to go, sir?"

"Upon an early day; probably next week."

By next week all the arrangements were completed, so far as the scheme of my education was concerned. Papa was also taken into Mr. Lawson's office; and the salary he received there, with his other means, placed him in a far more comfortable position than he had known for years. On the day I went to my new school our old lodgings were given up, and papa migrated to more agreeable quarters.

I don't know that I need enter into many particulars of this school. Mr. Lawson had been right in saying that I should receive every possible educational advantage there. I lived now but to study. I saw my father occasionally; and, once or twice during my earlier residence at Twickenham Mr. Lawson came and saw his protégée. After that his visits ceased altogether. I spent my holidays sometimes at school. I think I must have been at Twickenham nearly seven years, when one of the masters died suddenly during the holidays. It was a holiday that I was spending with my father. When I returned to Twickenham I found a new master in the schoolroom the first morning of the term. His name was Laurence Holmes.

You will surmise, Laura, what I am now going to tell you: that I and Laurence soon loved each other. Yes; a few weeks' intimacy, and then life had new interests and new hopes for me; still, all my old interests and hopes were associated with this fresh love of mine. I have often wondered what it is when a woman, whose aspirations, fancies, and idealities have sprung from the inspiration of some great and ennobling object, suddenly finds herself in love with a man whose life is the very antithesis of hers, and who can neither participate in nor appreciate her aspirations. In such a case, surely, there must be some jar in her moral and mental organisation, the effect of which must be hostile to her happiness. Oh, how I can realise the quickening thrill of emotion, which becomes intenser with the clearer revelation of the closeness of the union, when a woman loves both in heart and mind—when she has neither to step down nor ascend to the interests of the man she loves—when every throbbing pulse of passion is attuned to some high hope and purpose of which the intellect is the inspiring, directing, and governing spirit!

I do not mean, Laura, that in common language I at once fell in love with Laurence Holmes, or that he paid me the same compliment. I believe our conversation was at first rather commonplace. It was he who spoke first.

"Miss Mayne, I think?"

"Yes; and you, I believe, are Mr. Margetson's successor?" I replied.

"I am."

"Poor old Mr. Margetson! I little thought he

would have died so suddenly. He and I were good friends. I daresay you have heard that I have been here several years."

"Yes; Miss Tomlinson told me so, and that—"

"I am no longer to consider myself a pupil," I continued, interrupting him, "but pupil-teacher. It is so. A friend of papa's placed me here and educated me, and it is now understood that I am to do something for myself. I am not sorry, Mr. Holmes. When I leave here, I shall take a situation as governess. I suppose I shall be qualified for such a position in the course of two or three years. I am passionately fond of music, and I hope I have the necessary capabilities for turning this taste to some account. I have been educated with this object in view."

"I understand."

"Do you care for music?"

"Indeed I do. May I ask you to play?"

"Certainly. The pupils will not assemble for a quarter of an hour."

With this I sat down and played. Mr. Holmes, who had been standing hitherto, took a chair at a little distance from the piano. I chose one of the sonatas of Beethoven. Only last night, Laura, I played the one I selected when Laurence Holmes and I first met. As my hands fell upon the keys the old time and the old scene came back to me, I felt my hands tremble, and my ears sing. But I must go back to my story, and relate, as simply as I can, what passed that morning, ten years ago to-day, Laura—ten years ago!

I had not played long before I saw that he was moved by my playing. I believe that I surprised him. I do not speak this with any vanity; but you, Laura, who understand what this glorious music of Beethoven is, will be able to form an inadequate idea of its effect upon a man of considerable sensibility, when played with only honest and fair appreciation and skill. I had no occasion to refer to the notes; so my eyes were free to observe Laurence.

There was an enthusiastic look upon his face—all the features of which were good, perhaps striking—which seemed to deepen as I played. I wondered whether it was all the music which made him so rapt, or whether the music had only struck the key of some special hopes and thoughts. I was once tempted to ask him, but our intimacy did not yet warrant my doing so. I went on playing, until the striking of the clock warned me that the pupils might soon be expected to enter. As I closed the piano, he suddenly broke from his reverie, and thanked me eagerly for playing.

"Do you think I have any hope of making my musical capabilities profitable?" I asked.

"Indeed, indeed I do. I wish my hopes of excelling in my profession rested on as practicable a foundation as yours."

"Your profession, Mr. Holmes?"

"Yes; I hope to be something more than a schoolmaster, one day," he said. "I should be very miserable if I thought my life would be only one long round of teaching."

It was a long time before he spoke more openly of the direction in which his aspirations were bent. My curiosity was piqued by this. He, however, spoke at last. It was when we had been intimate six months.

"I am anxious to become an author, Miss Mayne," he said one afternoon when he had come to attend his classes; which classes were enjoying a holiday that day, owing to some fête in the neighborhood, but from which I had absented myself.

"An author! I thought so. You have written a book?"

"Yes, a novel; and it is now on its way to a publisher's. Literary success has long been a dream of mine, but the circumstances of my life have been terribly against my doing anything to make this success a matter of early achievement. I am very poor. I have been poor all my life, Miss Mayne. There has hardly been one step in my life that has been made easy for me by friend or relation. I do not say this with any view to self-glorification. I only wish you to understand the facts as they are. Now it seems to me if there be one thing more essential than another in the part of a man ambitious of literary distinction, it is the freedom from the hardest cares which humanity has to endure; and at every turn of my life I have had to encounter opposition of the bitterest kind. Illness, poverty, disappointment, have been my constant companions. Even with the company of these troublesome associates, I have written a good deal; but nothing that has ever seemed to justify me in endeavoring to place before those for whom I hope to write—men and women! Over my last work my hopes have been more encouraging, and to-day it left my hands for a publisher's."

"You cannot think, Mr. Holmes, how happy I shall be if it succeeds. Your ambition is something worthier than mine. To write—to arouse noble thoughts—how can I compare my ambition with yours? You will live in people's hearts, and I shall only please their ears. And yet is mine an altogether ignoble ambition?"

"Indeed, indeed it is not."

"And you have no idea how long before this book is in print?"

"No. It may never be. It will depend upon the taste or caprice of a publisher's reader; I have no means of my own to float it. Poverty again, Miss Mayne! It may be full of suggestive thought, its interest may be stirring, its theme novel, its style admirable, its lesson profitable; but opposed to these are the tastes which reign for the passing hour, and, probably, the humor of the judge who is called upon to pronounce a verdict upon its merits."

For many days, perhaps I ought to say weeks,

I waited anxiously to hear Laurence speak about his work again. When I asked him he had not heard of its fate; but he promised to inform me when his publishers wrote. Several months went on, and I again ventured to ask whether he had received any communication respecting his novel. The answer was the same: he added, however, that he should write. He spoke with some anxiety, and two or three days afterwards he told me that he had received a reply to his letter, and that the MS. had been returned.

"It is as I feared, Miss Mayne. A few indifferent commonplaces as to my book having certain merits; but the publishers' reader cannot recommend them to undertake the responsibility of its publication. They are, however, willing for a consideration to bring the work out. I need not say, Miss Mayne, that this consideration cannot be forthcoming on my part."

So the manuscript was sent on another journey; and a very long time elapsed before Laurence received any information regarding its fate; and in this case, as in the former, his ill-omened prophecy was verified. It was sad dreary work. To the best of my recollection the MS. was on its travels a year. At last, Laurence received a few lines from a certain house saying that it would undertake the responsibility of its publication; but that Mr. Holmes must expect no remuneration for this work, trusting to receive such when his reputation as an author had been fully established. Here were a few gleams of light. Laurence was willing to launch it on these terms; so it was soon printed and published.

You will surmise, Laura, that the success of this work was an all-important matter to me; for Laurence had long ceased to be something more than a friend to me; and though he had not so told me, I knew that I had become something more than a friend to him. He hesitated, I believe, in speaking more openly, owing to the precariousness of his circumstances; and I believe that the success of this work presented itself to him in some other light than that of being merely a selfish though laudable satisfaction. I had read the book in proof, and had been delighted with it. I am wise enough now to know that it had many faults, which had probably justified its refusal by those firms, who have identified themselves with the production of literature of only the very highest class; but to me then it was full of beauties. It was Laurence himself, or rather, my ideal of Laurence. How eagerly I looked forward to the reviews! The first two or three spoke with some praise of the work. Then followed others who treated it remorselessly. Finally, the three or four journals whose voices were considered authoritative pronounced a verdict which brought bitter tears to my eyes. The condemnation of the book was complete.

Laurence brought these papers and placed them in my hand without saying a word. A sickening sense of despair crept over me as I slowly made my way through the reviews. As the last paper dropped from my hands, I was startled by hearing a voice that I had not heard for years.

Looking up, I saw Mr. Lawson. Behind him was my father.

"Then you've not forgotten me, Miss Estella?"

"No, Mr. Lawson," I replied, with some constraint. His appearance at that moment, for some reason, gave me an unpleasant start. I felt that he was the last person I cared to see, though Heaven knows I owed him a heavy debt of gratitude, and that scarcely a day passed without my being sensible of the great kindness which he had shown on my behalf.

"When I last saw you, Miss Mayne, you were quite a girl," he said, with some embarrassment; "and now—Ah, how time passes! how the time passes!"

"Time does indeed go on, Mr. Lawson; for I shall be nineteen next birthday."

"Nineteen! Dear me! As I before remarked—how time flies! I daresay you will not be surprised to hear, Miss Mayne, that I now propose removing you from this establishment, to which I understand you have done great credit especially in respect of your musical accomplishments."

"Am I to leave the place?" I said, with evident pain in my voice. And you will be able to guess, Laura, the cause of my reluctance to go.

"Yes, Miss Mayne. I admire your natural reluctance to leave this establishment; it speaks well for the understanding which has been maintained by you and your superiors; and I don't wonder either at your very natural feelings of regret at parting with your companions. A friend of mine, a lady, wants a companion and governess for her daughters; and I am about to introduce you to her at my house. I have invited your father to stay a few days with me, and I shall expect you and him to-morrow. I have mentioned all these facts to the lady principal of this establishment, and she is prepared for your leaving immediately. So there is nothing more to be said at present."

I was, of course, bound to comply with Mr. Lawson's wishes. It was to him I owed all my educational advantages; and he claimed, and rightly claimed authority in planning my future career. Arrangements for the future were soon made. It was settled that I should go on the next day. The prospect of parting from Laurence was sad. We had performed joint duties together. I had shared in his hopes; friendship had become attachment; attachment, affection; affection, love. I had looked forward to the days of his attendance with eager longing; the interests of our common calling had been heightened by our

mutual regard—regard unexpressed on his part by any open avowal—and now all the tenor of my life was about to be changed.

Mr. Lawson and my father did not stay with me more than half an hour. When they left I set about making preparations for my departure, selecting from my poor belongings a few souvenirs for the most cherished amongst my friends. I had sealed up and directed a handsome copy of Shakespeare, which had been one of my prizes, as a present for Laurence, when the last post brought me a letter. It was in his handwriting.

"My Dear Estella,"—the letter ran,—*"As I was leaving the school to-day, Miss Tomlinson called me aside and told me there was a prospect of your going immediately. We may not, therefore, meet again. Under these circumstances, and others, I think I may write and say what I have been for some time urged to do. I have loved you long; and now that I tell you so, this love, it seems, must be nothing. If you were not going, Estella, I should, I think, have still kept the secret in my own heart. It would have been otherwise, however, had I not met with misfortune in the fate of my book. Its non-success is such that I dare not dream of further hope. I confess that I am fairly unmanned. Continually baffled and disappointed, I am obliged to make the humiliating admission that my courage has left me. You may reproach me, but not with justice; for there are times when the hardest of men succumb to the inevitableness of fate. I have, as the papers say, miscalculated my powers; and I know no more bitter reflection than that of an ambitious man who fails from having overvalued his capabilities, and bent his energies in a direction for which they were unfitted. This is my fate. I hoped the success of my book would have been such as to have justified me in telling you that I loved you, and that my hope in the future was to make you my wife. I can now only speak half what I was so desirous of saying. I love you. Here I write 'finis.' There is no sequel. Selfish you may say. Selfish you would not say if you knew what I know of two beings linked together for life; their home one of poverty, their expectations bounded by its impassable wall! My father's and mother's was this life, if life it can be called; and I will never doom a human being to suffer as my mother suffered. Now you know and understand me, Estella. Good-bye. Doubtful whether I shall see you again, I have written. May you be happy!"*

LAURENCE HOLMES.

I am afraid I was not just to Laurence; for an angry undefined feeling rose in my heart. I read the letter again, placed it in my desk, and locked it.

A few more hours, and I had left Twickenham. Both my father and Mr. Lawson welcomed me at the house of the latter. Its magnificence struck me. My guardian was evidently a man of more wealth than I had expected him to be.

I was a little constrained in my manner with him, as he took me over the house, pointing out its several beauties with great satisfaction and self-complacency. He conducted me from dining-room to drawing-room, from drawing-room to conservatory—every apartment being furnished with splendour and taste, the taste, I suspected, being more attributable to the upholsterer than to Mr. Lawson; statues lined the hall, the air of the conservatory was heavy with the scent of the choicest flowers, a fountain of majolica diffused a pleasant air of coolness with the splash of its waters. At last he took me into a picture-gallery, and on all sides were works of art by the greatest of modern masters: the walls seemed to glow with colour and brightness. Several pictures which I had before seen at the Royal Academy, and which had been eulogised in the papers as works of especial note, had come into Mr. Lawson's possession, and now made a portion of the glory of his home.

"Twenty years ago, if any one had said to me that I should have owned such a house as this," remarked Mr. Lawson, "and have been the proprietor of so much beauty, and grace, and worth. I should have called the assertion in question. But you see what industry can do, and frugality in one's earliest years!"

Poor papa accompanied us, but lingered more or less in the back-ground. I turned to him accidentally at these words of Mr. Lawson, and saw that he was walking with his head down. He had once been prosperous, and I—though long years had gone by since then—had shared in his prosperity.

Some other feeling became mixed with those of admiration and wonder—I grew envious. Yes, Laura, envious. As I passed through the gallery some transformation seemed to have taken place in me. I do not think I had known envy until this moment; and now, I daresay, you will be prepared for a good deal that I have to tell you. The turning-point in my life had come. Perhaps you will scarcely wonder at this, for every word of Laurence's letter was strong in my memory—the bitterness of its despair was still finding an echo in my heart.

The next day, Mrs. Wilkinson, the lady into whose service as governess it was proposed that I should enter, was expected, but wrote postponing the appointment. In the course of another week, Mr. Lawson had again heard from her, fixing an early day; and by this time I noticed some change in his manner towards me. He had hitherto been very kind and attentive. I now thought I observed a more conspicuous warmth in his manner, not unmingled with some anxiety.

"I am really trespassing on your kindness by emailing so long," I said.

"Not at all, not at all, Miss Mayne," he answered. "I assure you that I have been delighted with your society."

He seemed to be on the point of saying something more, then hesitated, and rather abruptly left the room, joining my father, who was in the conservatory, into which the room opened. Some time afterwards he returned, and then with a very few preliminary remarks asked me to be his wife.

I, first, refused him—kindly, but without any hesitation. He pleaded more earnestly—and then I listened. The result of the interview was, however, indefinite. When he left my side, my father came forward; and I at once saw that Mr. Lawson had made some mention to him previously of his hopes regarding myself; and in my father his cause had a good advocate.

"Refuse him, Estella? How can you be guilty of such folly? Lawson, though a little pompous and proud is one of the best of men. What a chance you will throw away if you do not accept his offer! You have surely known what poverty and dependence are! We were once better people than Lawson; and now, if you refuse him, you will have to take a governess's place. It is with gall and bitterness that I think sometimes of my past prosperity. You will worthily fill the position to which Lawson will raise you. Raise you!—no, hang it, he can't raise you any higher than you are by birth and education. He will be only placing you in your right station. And though I don't think I am particularly selfish, I may say that there will be some probability of my life being a little more cheerful than it has been for some years past if you become his wife."

I cannot blame my father for having urged me to the acceptance of Mr. Lawson's offer. The advocacy of my own inclination was just as powerful. I remembered all that Laurence had said respecting poverty; and I felt its contemplation to me was not one whit less appalling. Although I had known little of what the world calls luxury, for years past, in taste or association, I was no sooner brought within the range of its influence than I felt myself yielding to the spell. I liked the handsome spacious rooms; the numerous and graceful works of art appealed to the intellectual part of me; the life about me was pleasant. All hopes that had once been centred with Laurence were for ever to be abandoned; his letter to me had made this clear.

Swayed by such considerations I told my father that I would reconsider the proposal of Mr. Lawson. I knew well in my heart what my answer would be, and in the evening Mr. Lawson received it from my own lips.

We were soon married.

What such a marriage proved, Laura, you will with little difficulty realise. I never loved my husband; and as, alas, I could not long disguise this melancholy fact from him, what love, or what counterfeit of love, he entertained for me soon vanished. Perhaps I did not care to love or to be loved. I had sold myself to the world, and the world gave me of its own. That I was beautiful, I knew; and admirers were not wanting who told me so with every varying phase of flattery. Women envied me, and I accepted their envy, as better women would have accepted their regards and good-will. I grew hardened, and at times hateful to myself. And then I would endeavor to justify the course I had taken. My love for Laurence could never be anything but a name; his own lips had pronounced its doom. Was I then guilty in electing the path that lay before me?

When I had been married about a year, I observed in a paper the notice of a book by an anonymous writer, full of praise and encouragement. I obtained this book, and read it with profound interest. I detected in its style traces of a hand familiar to me; and all at once it burst upon me that Laurence was the author. It proved so; for when several editions had been called for, his name appeared on the title-page. He had made his mark—in a year his name would be well and widely known. Ah, if he had been patient! If I had been patient!

Time went on; and it fared with Laurence as I had anticipated. This success of this one book was soon followed by the success of others; and in a short time, from being comparatively unknown, he became a man of note. Not infrequently I met him at various parties. Alas, how separated we were now! What a contrast our lives presented! I was living for the world, and he was living for his art.

When Mr. Lawson and I had been married about three years, I noticed an alteration in his manner. He became abstracted and absorbed. Always very devoted to his business, he was more devoted now than even—but with a restlessness and anxiety which I had never observed before. I ventured to mention this to him one day.

"Restless! Yes, I am," he replied. "I have a good deal on my mind just now. But really, Estella, I did not know that you were interested enough in me to take much heed of my looks and conduct."

The rebuke was just.

"I am sorry, Mr. Lawson, if you have any cause for complaint."

"Complaint! Oh, no! You go your way, and I go mine. But I may as well give you a hint that a little less expenditure will be needful on your part for the future. I have never been close, as you know; but there are reasons—pressing reasons—for your ceasing to be so lavish."

"Certainly, if you wish it."

He said no more, and I countermanded the orders I had given for a party on an early day.

I knew very little of my husband's business, but from what he now said it was easy to see that things were not going so easily with him. I was, however, far from guessing that this little cloud on the horizon presaged a storm, which was soon to burst, and wreck many a home and break many a heart.

Some weeks afterwards I intimated that I had accepted an invitation to a large party for an early night.

"Don't you remember what I told you a short time since? You must not only cease to entertain at home, but you must cease even to go out so frequently. I am thinking of laying aside my carriage. As for this party, you may go if you choose; but I fear that I shall be unable to accompany you."

"Indeed! I will write to excuse myself, if you like."

"Oh, no; you need not do that. Go, by all means—go by all means!" and with these words he took the paper and left the room.

It was on my tongue to ask him to be more explicit; but the opportunity was lost. I was a little alarmed, but from my experience of Mr. Lawson I inferred that he was naturally a careful man, and that he would, in many cases, have advised an economy when there was no immediately urgent cause for so doing.

The evening of the party arrived, and I went unaccompanied by my husband. Many of the guests this evening seemed very excited. I soon ascertained the cause. There had been a panic in the City, and many houses had gone down. Several gentlemen spoke of having had heavy losses; and I heard that expected guests had not come owing to the disaster of the day. The party broke up earlier than I expected. Upon arriving home, I passed at once to the dining-room, where I found Mr. Lawson, as I thought, sleeping in an arm-chair near the fireplace. The servant poured me out a glass of water, closed the door, and left us together. My husband's back was towards me, and there was an open newspaper on the floor, which had evidently fallen from his hand.

"Mr. Lawson!" I said, approaching him.

He did not speak.

"Mr. Lawson!" I said again. By this time I was close to him, standing where I could see his face well. It was ashy pale. I stooped down. Good heavens! he was dead.

I must pass over the details of that terrible night. He had been struck with apoplexy whilst reading the paper, the columns of which recorded the failure of so many firms, and amongst them of firms with which he had been in the habit of doing business for years, and whose failure, as I quickly ascertained, had induced the failure of my husband's house. The sad and terrible truth was soon ascertained. The edition of the paper had been a late and special one, containing news of the last wrecks of the day; and the shock of the story had killed Mr. Lawson.

His ruin was complete. From the wreck there was literally nothing saved. I was as poor as I was four years ago. Alas, had the lesson of those four years been such as to discipline me for the experience which must now be inevitably mine?

My father was of course unable to render me much assistance. The art which I had long loved constituted the resources upon which I had now to depend. As I touched the keys of the piano on the night before the sale of our furniture, I felt with some pride that my skill here would be of service. Whilst I could play as I played then, speaking without vanity or unnecessary self-assertion, I need not be utterly a beggar.

I had little or no difficulty in procuring employment. Thanks to the intimacy which I had steadily maintained with my old governess at Twickenham, by correspondence, and by the introduction of many pupils, which my position enabled me to obtain for her, I was able to rely upon her assistance in this pressing hour of need.

And now my art became my comfort, my inspirer. No social triumph that I had ever gained was comparable with the triumph which I was now winning by my careful study—my patient mastery of the difficulties of my profession. I lived in a new and better world. It was difficult to look back and realise that it had ever been possible for me to have been greedy for, and satisfied with, the triumphs that await the ambitious woman of the world. My life passed peacefully and uneventfully. After a while I was induced to make my appearance in public; but I did not yield until a good deal of pressure had been brought to bear upon me. The applause, however, which greeted me, I am glad to say, gratifying and pleasant as it was, made no such appeal to my vanity as to endanger the existence of those better feelings which cultivation of my musical skill had fostered and developed, and which were leavening my whole nature.

Amongst the better hopes of my life were those which centred in Laurence Holmes. I read of his growing success with pleasure, and the expectation of seeing him again was great and ever present. My art, it seemed to me, was purifying me, and making me worthier of companionship with him. I blamed myself for having been unjust when he avowed his reasons for not asking me to be his wife. For if indeed he had been wrong then, and showed some cowardice in hesitating to face the world and its responsibilities, how infinitely more blameworthy had I been in yielding to the temptations presented by a wealthy marriage, how I had worshipped the world, how I had made myself a willing slave to its exactions, its behests, its humiliating judgments!

Thank God, Laura, that life was over! I was a woman now—working, and loving her work; knowing as I did that this work was exercising the noblest of influences upon my whole nature.

In due time, Laurence and I met again. It was at my old school. As he entered the drawing-room, a slight pretty girl was leaning on his arm. A pain shot to my heart. A sudden fear seized me. Was that fear to be realised? It was.

"Miss Dashwood," he said, coming forward and introducing her. Then turning to the young girl at his side, he said, referring to me, "This is a very old friend of mine, Alice. I knew her some years ago."

Alice timidly glanced at me, and at a movement from me sat down by my side. Laurence chatted with me some minutes. When he left, Alice Dashwood was still sitting by me.

"There was a Miss Dashwood of whom I once heard a good deal—a daughter of Mr. Dashwood, the great contractor?"

"I am that Miss Dashwood," she replied, with a pleasant laugh; "you have of course heard, then, that I and Laurence—Mr. Holmes—are engaged!"

My breath came quick, and I did not answer for a moment or two.

"This is the first time I have heard of Mr. Holmes' engagement. I have not seen him for some time. I was not even prepared for meeting him to-night."

Laurence Holmes and Alice Dashwood—the rising author and the heiress! Dashwood, Crane, & Co., contractors, were credited with fabulous wealth; and the fortune of Alice Dashwood, who was an only child, was therefore reasonably enough calculated as very considerable. I had heard a good deal of her during the last year of my married life; and had only lost an opportunity of meeting her by the merest accident in the world.

"Have you been long engaged?"

"Only a month."

And then she prattled on about their first meeting, their introduction, and the simple details of their courtship. Laurence had manifestly been silent upon our past relationship; and I wondered, naturally enough, at the causes thereof. Alice Dashwood was a sweet and charming girl, but certainly not the girl whom I could ever regard as one likely to arouse such a feeling as love in the heart of Laurence Holmes; and I suspected that such love as she had given him was, however sincere, at any rate without depth or passion. Would Laurence open his heart to me, and explain what was yet a riddle?

In the course of the evening, we found ourselves together.

"I must congratulate you, I suppose, Mr. Holmes, upon your engagement to Miss Dashwood."

"Yes; I am engaged."

"I hope you will be happy. But I am surprised—"

"At what?"

"Miss Dashwood is a charming girl; but I thought you would have chosen differently."

"Yes; I daresay."

"You love her?"

He hesitated, and then replied, "Yes, I love her."

"Report credits her with being very wealthy; but I for a moment can never believe that you would be swayed by any such considerations as wealth."

"You have met with success in your art," I went on, as he made no reply to my last remark; "your patience has been rewarded—wealth can surely not have made such an irresistible appeal to you that you have been ready to ask for Miss Dashwood's hand without loving her. O Laurence, I should indeed be sorry to believe that of you!"

He winced. Alice came up at the same moment, and of course the subject dropped.

By some chance it happened that I and Laurence met frequently now. Alice and I too grew intimate. I at first thought she had seemed shy in my presence; but she had conquered this shyness, and was very friendly and affable. She spoke with great naïveté of her wealth; and I was not surprised to find that she took no great interest in the art of which Laurence was a follower, though I believed that it had made some appeal to her vanity; for he was now spoken of everywhere as a rising man—a man destined to reach the very highest position in his elected calling; and position—even a literary position—would present itself as fairly valuable in the eyes of one whose schooling had naturally been such as to teach her the great importance of money in the matrimonial market.

You will naturally ask me, Laura, whether I had ceased to care for Laurence. No; I had not. To see him—to be worthy of him—had been my prayer and hope in those good days when the peaceful pursuit of my art was remoulding and remaking my character. As the dross of vanity, ambition, and miserable self-seeking, which make the life of a woman of the world, were leaving me, I found higher and purer objects for attainment; and for Laurence Holmes, association with these objects seemed to me a fit and ennobling hope. I had gained my better life, but, alas, of this better life he would form no part.

I shed bitter tears, for I was but a woman. O Laura, only a woman!

I had known Alice Dashwood for more than two months, and she had frequently been in the habit of calling upon me, sometimes alone, and sometimes with her affianced husband. I was now living in a pleasant house in the suburbs of London. There was a pretty garden behind upon

which my little drawing-room opened. I had been practising one bright morning in July for more than two hours, preparatory to some public appearance at night, when I heard a carriage drive to the front door, and the next minute my little servant admitted Miss Dashwood.

Alice came hurriedly forward, with a pale face and eyes red with crying.

"I wish to speak with you earnestly," she cried, "very earnestly. I am very unhappy. I have been unhappy for a long time."

"Unhappy, Miss Dashwood? I am, indeed, sorry to hear that; and by what means has this unhappiness been caused?"

"By the conduct of Laurence! I may speak openly to you, may I not? for you knew him before I did, and was, he assures me, a good friend of his. His manner has so changed toward me lately—I cannot exactly describe how; but he has seemed to become indifferent—and it's so hard, for I love him so!"

"You love him, deeply?" I put this as a question.

"Indeed, indeed, I do! I sometimes think I have offended him, and he tells me I have not. O Estella, I want you to intercede for me, to ascertain whether I have indeed given him offence; and, if possible, to make it between us as it used to be. He is so strange—so restless now! Is it possible that he has ceased to love me?"

"Would it pain you very much if he had ceased to love you?"

"Pain me, Estella! I sometimes think it would kill me. You must not think I do not love him—that I do not value his love! Oh, it is priceless. You believe I am vain and light, and have no depth of feeling. Oh, how greatly you misunderstand me! Nor am I worldly, as perhaps you may imagine I am. I esteem Laurence, but I love him too, Estella—I love him too!"

"Come into the garden, Alice," I said; "we can talk better there: this room seems so hot."

We strolled out, and sat down at some little distance from the house. Though I controlled myself, I felt almost stifled, and my heart beat loudly. I guessed the meaning of Laurence's conduct. He was ceasing to care for Alice; and it was because he had seen me again, and I was free.

"Are you sure that he once loved you?" I asked.

"Sure—indeed, I am! It is only of late that his conduct has so changed. O Estella, you will be my friend, will you not, and speak to Laurence? For, if you are such an old friend of his, you may do so with no impropriety."

"I may do so, as you say, with no impropriety," I replied mechanically. "But surely Laurence is not unkind to you?"

"No, no; not unkind. I could, I think, even bear his unkindness. It is his coldness that pains me so. His coldness, which seems to increase every time I see him. O Estella, his love for me is dying—his love for me is dying!"

The plaintive tone in which she spoke these words went to my heart. I thought that she was worldly and frivolous—that the glamour of Laurence's position had dazzled her; but every word convinced me that she could love as well as I could, and that she was as much a woman as I was. For what earnest true woman will not desire that the whom she loves should be harsh rather than indifferent?

"Perhaps your fancy has deceived you," I said; "you are, probably, a little too exacting. You know Laurence is a writer of books, and book-writers are often necessarily very absent. You are mistaken, Alice."

"I am not mistaken," she replied with firmness. "My eyes are quick to see; and Laurence is ceasing to love me. Speak to Laurence on my behalf—delicately. There is no one but you whom I would commission with such a task. I have no mother—no sister; you are my best friend, as well as his."

I felt that I held this girl's happiness in my hand. A word from me, and the breach between Alice Dashwood and Laurence would be fatally widened.

Alice and hardly ceased speaking before my servant came from the drawing-room, and said that I was wanted. The girl's face turned red as she noticed Alice and me together.

"I will come directly," I said. "Wait here, Alice. I dare say my visitor is only some professional friend, who has called about the concert at which I have to appear to-night."

I left Alice, her sad face darkened by the overshadowing trees, and entered the house by the drawing-room window. And here was my visitor—Laurence Holmes!

After we had exchanged a few common-places, Laurence opened the mission which had brought him there.

"You cannot guess why I have come, Estella?"

"No; indeed I cannot."

"It is to speak to you of our past; it is to recall the days when I loved you, and hoped to make you my wife."

"You have come here to speak of these things to me, Mr. Holmes, when you are already engaged to another?"

"Alas, engaged, as you say! I say it with shame—I have erred fatally here. I thought I cared for Alice—that, at least, I could be happy with her. Now I know that I never loved her; now I know that I only loved you."

"You have gone too far to hope to retrace your steps. You cannot break your engagement with Alice Dashwood; it is too late."

"Too late! Is it you who tell me so? Do you think she would heed it much if I did break my engagement with her? Are her affections so deep that she would feel anything beyond a

passing sorrow? No. I love you, Estella, and only you."

"You tell me this—you, who must have known months ago that I was free—who could not have forgotten what my love for you once was? Knowing all this, however, you contract an engagement with a girl who you, in almost as many words, tell me has no heart, and would not regret the breaking of your engagement with her! Why was this, Laurence?"

He hung his head.

"I will tell you," he replied, in almost a whisper; "I will tell you. You know the story of my life—its disappointment and its poverty. Well, success came at last, and, by its means, I was thrown into the society of the rich and the great. That success which I had long coveted became a curse: it intoxicated, it maddened me. I had looked forward to a calm happy triumph—such a triumph as no man in contemplating need lose his self-respect. Such a triumph was not mine. When my long years of waiting and working received at last a recognition of their worth, the prize dazzled my senses. My satisfaction was not an ecstasy—it was a fever. Alas, a grosser ambition became mingled with one that had as yet been honest and pure! I saw that my means, good as they were, and extensive as they might be, if every fresh success was greater than the past, would be inadequate to satisfy the craving—indefinite, wild—that had seized me. Money and position seemed invaluable. The flattery of those who possessed these in good measure only increased my thirst. The calm pursuit of my art sometimes even palled upon me. When such a feeling as this seized me I became frightened; for I knew that if I neglected to cultivate it, what position I had gained would soon slip away from me; and the fear would even steal over me at times that my hand was losing its cunning. It was about this time that I was introduced to Miss Dashwood. I had some name, and she had wealth."

"Dashwood was not very anxious that his daughter should marry a rich man, and showed me considerable friendship. Here were means at hand sufficient to satisfy me. I proposed to her, and was accepted. Now you know all."

Knowing the power I possessed from the admission of Alice Dashwood, and the confession of Laurence, it had not been easy for me to conquer myself. But there had been something in his last speech which made the victory easier. The pursuit of my art had purified me and ennobled me; all there was of original truth in me, obscured and almost obliterated as it had been by my past life, had been awakened and quickened by its influence. In Laurence's words I read an unmistakable confession of disloyalty to his calling; and this fact jarred upon me, irritated me. It was like the sudden striking of some discordant note in music which had been hitherto all harmony.

"And now," said Laurence, "and now that I have seen you again, I find all my old love come back. I love you now, as I have loved you always. Speak, Estella!"

I spoke very slowly, and after a long pause. I spoke in no doubt, though the alteration in my feelings had been strangely sudden. I almost wondered that I could so speak; but I can look back now and find a complete explanation. I do not like to describe Laurence's conduct as false, perhaps the word is too strong a term. At any rate, his life seemed out of sympathy with mine, and I could not speak otherwise than I did.

"I do not love you, Laurence! Let that answer be enough. And, believe me, you will be happier with Alice Dashwood than with me. Experience has taught me some good lessons, and it has shown me that for a married life I have no vocation. We should not be happy together; of this, Laurence, I am as sure as though I had a vision of our married life before me. You are deluding yourself when you say that you could only be happy with me. For I have no heart to give you, Laurence; no heart to give you. You tell me, that you have failed to find entire peace and satisfaction in your artistic life. With me it is quite otherwise. You may say, perhaps, that I am prejudiced, and narrow in my views; but my life now is my art. I live and breathe in it; and every new day convinces me that in this and this only can I expect happiness as a woman. Should I be a fit companion for you? No. My destiny is chosen. I welcome it. For worlds I would not change it. No, Laurence; no! It is vain for you to plead. Believe me, when I tell you that we should have no happiness together. Our world would be apart. You would find in me no compensation for that world which, you tell me, has now become so valuable in your eyes. Be true to Alice. She will make you a better wife than I."

"Estella, is it indeed to be as you say?"

"It is. You could not have urged your cause with less chance of its being favorably received than you have urged it to-day. You have shown to me how much apart we are; how much apart we must ever be. Alice loves you. Do not doubt it. You may take my assurance of that. She loves you. I know all. She has told me of your growing indifference to her; of the pain it has been to her; of her eagerness to know the reason of your changed conduct. Go to her. She is here. Make your peace with her. Cherish her love, for it is yours; and mine is not."

"Alice here!"

"Yes, in the garden. Be wise, and secure her love. It may be a blessing to you in time; mine never can be."

But little more was said. We were both of us silent for a long time. I can guess what was passing in Laurence's mind. He rose with a sigh.

"Go to her, Laurence."

He left the room, and I gazed after him. He had chosen his path, and I had chosen mine. It was well that I had determined that these paths should diverge. You will guess, Laura, how it fared with Laurence and Alice Dashwood. They were soon married. I shall never be.

The critics said that I played that night more brilliantly than ever. They little guessed the storm and trouble in my heart.

Lady Farquhar's old Lady.

A TRUE GHOST STORY.

"One that was a woman, sir; but, rest her soul, she's dead."

I myself have never seen a ghost (I am by no means sure that I wish ever to do so), but I have a friend whose experience in this respect has been less limited than mine. Till lately, however, I had never heard the details of Lady Farquhar's adventure, though the fact of there being a ghost story which she could, if she chose, relate with the authority of an eye-witness, had been more than once alluded to before me. Living at extreme ends of the country, it is but seldom my friend and I are able to meet; but a few months ago I had the good fortune to spend some days in her house, and one evening our conversation happening to fall on the subject of the possibility of so-called "supernatural" visitations or communications, suddenly what I had heard returned to my memory.

"By the bye," I exclaimed, "we need not go far for an authority on the question. You have seen a ghost yourself, Margaret. I remember once hearing it alluded to before you, and you did not contradict it. I have so often meant to ask you for the whole story. Do tell it to us now."

Lady Farquhar hesitated for a moment, and her usually bright expression grew somewhat graver. When she spoke, it seemed to be with a slight effort.

"You mean what they all call the story of 'my old lady,' I suppose," she said at last.

"Oh, yes, if you care to hear it, I will tell it you. But there is not much to tell, remember."

"There seldom is in true stories of the kind," I replied. "Genuine ghost stories are generally abrupt and inconsequent in the extreme; but on this very account all the more impressive. Don't you think so?"

"I don't know that I am a fair judge," she answered. "Indeed," she went on rather gravely, "my own opinion is that what you call true ghost stories are very seldom told at all."

"How do you mean? I don't quite understand you," I said, a little perplexed by her words and tone.

"I mean," she replied, "that people who really believe they have come in contact with—anything of that kind, seldom care to speak about it."

"Do you really think so? do you mean that you feel so yourself?" I exclaimed with considerable surprise. "I had no idea you did, or I would not have mentioned the subject. Of course you know I would not ask you to tell it if it is the least painful or disagreeable to you to talk about it."

"But it isn't. Oh, no, it is not nearly so bad as that," she replied, with a smile. "I cannot really say it is either painful or disagreeable to me to recall it, for I cannot exactly apply either of those words to the thing itself. All that I feel is a sort of shrinking from the subject, strong enough to prevent my ever alluding to it lightly or carelessly. Of all things, I should dislike to have a joke made of it. But with you I have no fear of that. And you trust me, don't you? I don't mean as to truthfulness only; but you don't think me deficient in common sense and self-control—not morbid, or very apt to be run away with by my imagination?"

"Not the sort of person one would pick out as likely to see ghosts?" I replied. "Certainly not. You are far too sensible and healthy and vigorous. I can't fancy you the victim of delusion of any kind very readily. But as to ghosts—are they or are they not delusions? There lies the question! Tell us your experience of them, any way."

So she told the story I had asked for—told it in the simplest language, and with no exaggeration of tone or manner, as we sat there in her pretty drawing-room, our chairs drawn close to the fire, for it was Christmas time, and the weather was "seasonable." Two or three of Margaret's children were in the room, though not within hearing of us; all looked bright and cheerful, nothing mysterious. Yet notwithstanding the total deficiency of ghostly accessories, the story impressed me vividly.

"It was early in the spring of '55 that it happened," began Lady Farquhar; "I never forget the year, for a reason I will tell you afterwards. It is fully fifteen years ago now—a long time—but I am still quite able to recall the feeling in this strange adventure of mine left on me, though a few details and particulars have grown confused and misty. I think it often happens so when one tries, as it were too hard, to be accurate and unexaggerated in telling over anything. One's very honesty is against one. I have not told it over many times, but each time it seems more difficult to tell it quite exactly; the impression left at the time was so powerful that I have always dreaded incorrectness or exaggeration creeping in. It reminds me, too, of the curious way in which a familiar word or name grows distorted, and then cloudy and strange, if one looks at it too long or thinks about it too much. But I must get on with my story. Well, to begin again. In the winter of

'54-'55 we were living—my mother, my sister, and I, that is, and from time to time my brother—in, or rather near, a quiet little village on the south coast of Ireland. We had gone there, before the worst of the winter began at home, for the sake of my health. I had not been as well as usual for some time (this was greatly owing, I believe, to my having lately endured unusual anxiety of mind), and my dear mother dreaded the cold weather for me, and determined to avoid it. I say that I had had unusual anxiety to bear, still it was not of a kind to render me morbid or fanciful. And what is even more to the point, my mind was perfectly free from prepossession or association in connection with the place we were living in, or the people who had lived there before us. I simply knew nothing whatever of these people, and I had no sort of fancy about the house—that it was haunted, or anything of that kind, and indeed I never heard that it was thought to be haunted. It did not look like it; it was just a moderate-sized, somewhat old-fashioned country, or rather sea-side, house, furnished, with the exception of one room, in an ordinary enough modern style. The exception was a small room on the bedroom floor, which, though not locked off (that is to say, the key was left in the lock outside), was not given up for our use, as it was crowded, with musty old furniture, packed closely together, and all of a fashion many, many years older than that of the contents of the rest of the house. I remember some of the pieces of furniture still, though I think I was only once or twice in the room all the time we were there. There were two or three old-fashioned cabinets or bureaux; there was a regular four-post bedstead, with the gloomy curtains still hanging round it; and ever so many spider-legged chairs and rickety tables; and I rather think in one corner there was a squire. But there was nothing particularly curious or attractive, and we never thought of meddling with the things or "poking about," as girls sometimes do; for we always thought it was by mistake that this room had not been locked off altogether, so that no one should meddle with anything in it.

"We had rented the house for six months from a captain Marchmont, a half-pay officer, naval or military, I don't know which, for we never saw him, and all the negotiations were managed by an agent. Captain Marchmont and his family, as a rule, lived at Ballyreina all the year round—they found it cheap and healthy, I suppose—but this year they had preferred to pass the winter in some livelier neighbourhood, and they were very glad to let the house. It never occurred to us to doubt our landlord's being the owner of it: it was not till some time after we left that we learned that he himself was only a tenant, though a tenant of long standing. There were no people about to make friends with, or to hear local gossip from. There were no gentry within visiting distance, and if there had been, we should hardly have cared to make friends for so short a time as we were to be there. The people of the village were mostly fishermen and their families; there were so many of them, we never got to know any specially. The doctor and the priest and the Protestant clergyman were all new-comers, and all three very uninteresting. The clergyman used to dine with us sometimes, as my brother had had some sort of introduction to him when we came to Ballyreina; but we never heard anything about the place from him. He was a great talker, too; I am sure he would have told us anything he knew. In short, there was nothing romantic or suggestive either about our house or the village. But we didn't care. You see we had gone there simply for rest and quiet and pure air, and we got what we wanted.

"Well, one evening about the middle of March I was up in my room dressing for dinner, and just as I had about finished dressing, my sister Helen came in. 'Aren't you ready yet, Maggie? Are you making yourself extra smart for Mr. Conroy?' Mr. Conroy was the clergyman; he was dining with us that night. And then Helen looked at me and found fault with me, half in fun of course, for not having put on a prettier dress. I remember I said it was good enough for Mr. Conroy, who was no favorite of mine; but Helen wasn't satisfied till I agreed to wear a bright scarlet neck-ribbon of hers, and she ran off to her room to fetch it. I followed her almost immediately. Her room and mine, I must, by the bye, explain, were at extreme ends of a passage several yards in length. There was a wall on one side of this passage, and a balustrade overlooking the staircase on the other. My room was at the end nearest the top of the staircase. There were no doors along the passage leading to Helen's room, but just beside her door, at the end, was that of the unused room I told you of, filled with the old furniture. The passage was lighted from above by a skylight—I mean, it was by no means dark or shadowy—and on the evening I am speaking of it was still clear daylight. We dined early at Ballyreina; I don't think it could have been more than a quarter to five when Helen came into my room. Well, as I was saying, I followed her almost immediately, so quickly that as I came out of my room I was in time to catch sight of her as she ran along the passage, and to see her go into her own room. Just as I lost sight of her—I was coming along more deliberately, you understand—suddenly, how or when exactly I cannot tell, I perceived another figure walking along the passage in front of me. It was a woman, a little thin woman, but though she had her back to me, something in her gait told me she was not young. She seemed a little bent, and walked feebly. I can remember

her dress even now with the most perfect distinctness. She had a gown of gray clinging stuff, rather scanty in the skirt, and one of those funny little old-fashioned black shawls with a sewed-on border, that you seldom see nowadays. Do you know the kind I mean? It was a narrow, shawl-pattern border, and there was a short tufty black fringe below the border. And she had a gray poke bonnet, a bonnet made of silk "gathered" on to a large stiff frame; "drawn" bonnets they used to be called. I took in all these details of her dress in a moment, and even in that moment I noticed too that the materials of her clothes looked good, though so plain and old-fashioned. But somehow my first impulse when I saw her was to call out, "Fraser, is that you?" Fraser was my mother's maid: she was a young woman and not the least like the person in front of me, but I think a vague idea rushed across my mind that it might be Fraser dressed up to trick the other servants. But the figure took no notice of my exclamation; it, or she, walked on quietly, not even turning her head round in the least; she walked slowly down the passage, seemingly quite unconscious of my presence, and, to my extreme amazement, disappeared into the unused room. The key, as I think I told you, was always turned in the lock—that is to say, the door was locked, but the key was left in it; but the old woman did not seem to me to unlock the door, or even to turn the handle. There seemed no obstacle in her way: she just quietly, as it were, walked through the door. Even by this time I hardly think I felt frightened. What I had seen had passed too quickly for me as yet to realise its strangeness. Still I felt perplexed and vaguely uneasy, and I hurried on to my sister's room. She was standing by the toilet table, searching for the ribbon. I think I must have looked startled, for before I could speak she called out, "Maggie, what ever is the matter with you? You look as if you were going to faint." I asked her if she had heard anything, though it was an inconsistent question, for to my ears there had been no sound at all. Helen answered, "Yes:" a moment before I came into the room she had heard the lock of the lumber-room (so we called it) door click, and had wondered what I could be going in there for. Then I told her what I had seen. She looked a little startled, but declared it must have been one of the servants.

"If it is a trick of the servants," I answered, "it should be exposed;" and when Helen offered to search through the lumber-room with me at once, I was very ready to agree to it. I was so satisfied of the reality of what I had seen, that I declared to Helen that the old woman, whoever she was, must be in the room; it stood to reason that, having gone in, she must still be there, as she could not possibly have come out again without our knowledge.

"So plucking up our courage, we went to the lumber-room door. I felt so certain that but a moment before some one had opened it, that I took hold of the knob quite confidently and turned it, just as one always does to open a door. The handle turned, but the door did not yield. I stooped down to see why; the reason was plain enough: the door was still locked, locked as usual, and the key in the lock! Then Helen and I stared at each other: her mind was evidently recurring to the sound she had heard; what I began to think I can hardly put in words.

"But when we got over this new start a little, we set to work to search the room as we had intended. And we searched it thoroughly, I assure you. We dragged the old tables and chairs out of their corners, and peeped behind the cabinets and chests of drawers where no one could have been hidden. Then we climbed upon the old bedstead, and shook the curtains till we were covered with dust; and then we crawled under the valances, and came out looking like sweeps; but there was nothing to be found. There was certainly no one in the room, and by all appearances no one could have been there for weeks. We had hardly time to make ourselves fit to be seen when the dinner-bell rang, and we had to hurry down-stairs. As we ran down we agreed to say nothing of what had happened before the servants, but after dinner in the drawing-room we told our story. My mother and brother listened to it attentively, said it was very strange, and owned themselves as puzzled as we. Mr. Conroy of course laughed uproariously, and made us dislike him more than ever. After he had gone we talked it over again among ourselves, and my mother, who hated mysteries, did her utmost to explain what I had seen in a matter-of-fact, natural way. Was I sure it was not only Helen herself I had seen, after fancying she had reached her own room? Was I quite certain it was not Fraser after all, carrying a shawl perhaps, which made her look different? Might it not have been this, that, or the other? It was no use. Nothing could convince me that I had not seen what I had seen; and though, to satisfy my mother, we cross-questioned Fraser, it was with no result in the way of explanation. Fraser evidently knew nothing that could throw light on it, and she was quite certain that at the time I had seen the figure, both the other servants were down-stairs in the kitchen. Fraser was perfectly trustworthy; we warned her not to frighten the others by speaking about the affair at all, but we could not leave off speaking about it among ourselves. We spoke about it so much for the next few days, that at last my mother lost patience, and forbade us to mention it again. At least she pretended to lose patience; in reality I believe she put a stop to the discussion because she thought it might have a bad effect on our nerves, on mine especially; for I found out afterwards that in her

anxiety she even went the length of writing about it to our old doctor at home, and that it was by his advice she acted in forbidding us to talk about it any more. Poor dear mother! I don't know that it was very sound advice. One's mind often runs all the more on things one is forbidden to mention. It certainly was so with me, for I thought over my strange adventure almost incessantly for some days after we left off talking about it."

Here Margaret paused.

"And is that all?" I asked, feeling a little disappointed, I think, at the unsatisfactory ending to the "true ghost story."

"All!" repeated Lady Farquhar, rousing herself as if from a reverie, "All! oh, dear no! I have sometime wished it had been, for I don't think what I have told you would have left any long-lasting impression on me. All! oh, dear no. I am only at the beginning of my story."

So we resettled ourselves again to listen, and Lady Farquhar continued:

"For some days, as I said, I could not help thinking a good deal of the mysterious old woman I had seen. Still, I assure you I was not exactly frightened. I was more puzzled—puzzled and annoyed at not being able in any way to explain the mystery. But by ten days or so from the time of my first adventure the impression was beginning to fade. Indeed, the day before the evening I am now going to tell you of, I don't think my old lady had been in my head at all. It was filled with other things. So, don't you see, the explaining away what I saw as entirely a delusion, a fancy of my own brain, has a weak point here; for had it been all my fancy, it would surely have happened sooner—at the time my mind really was full of the subject. Though even if it had been so, it would not have explained the curious coincidence of my "fancy" with facts, actual facts of which at the time I was in complete ignorance. It must have been just about ten days after my first adventure that I happened one evening, between eight and nine o'clock, to be alone upstairs in my own room. We had dined at half-past five as usual, and had been sitting together in the drawing-room, since dinner, but I had made some little excuse for coming up-stairs; the truth being that I wanted to be alone to read over a letter which the evening post (there actually was an evening post at Ballyreina) had brought me, and which I had only had time to glance at. It was a very welcome and dearly-prized letter, and the reading of it made me very happy. I don't think I had felt as happy all the months we had been in Ireland as I was feeling that evening. Do you remember my saying I never forget the year all this happened? It was the year '55 and the month of March, the spring following that first dreadful "Cremean winter," and news had just come to England of the Czar's death, and every one was wondering and hoping and fearing what would be the results of it. I had no very near friends in the Crimea, but of course like every one else I was intensely interested in all that was going on, and in this letter of mine there was told the news of the Czar's death, and there was a good deal of comment upon it. I had read my letter—more than once, I daresay—and was beginning to think I must go down to the others in the drawing-room. But the fire in my bedroom was very tempting; it was burning so brightly that though I had got up from my chair by the fireside to leave the room, and had blown out the candle I had read my letter by, I yielded to the inclination to sit down again for a minute or two to dream pleasant dreams and think pleasant thoughts. At last I rose and turned towards the door—it was standing wide open, by the bye. But I had hardly made a step from the fireplace when I was stopped short by what I saw. Again the same strange indefinable feeling of not knowing how or when it had come there, again the same painful sensation of perplexity (not yet amounting to fear) as to whom or what it was I saw before me. The room, you must understand, was perfectly flooded with the firelight; except in the corners, perhaps, every object was as distinct as possible. And the object I was staring at was not in a corner, but standing there right before me—between me and the open door, alas!—in the middle of the room. It was the old woman again, but this time with her face towards me, with a look upon it, it seemed to me, as if she were conscious of my presence. It is very difficult to tell over thoughts and feelings that can hardly have taken any time to pass, or that passed almost simultaneously. My very first impulse this time was, as it had been the first time I saw her, to explain in some natural way the presence before me. I think this says something for my common sense, does it not? My mind did not readily desert matters of fact, you see. I did not think of Fraser this time, but the thought went through my mind, "She must be some friend of the servants who comes in to see them of an evening. Perhaps they have sent her up to look at my fire." So at first I looked up at her with simple inquiry. But as I looked my feelings changed. I realised that this was the same being who had appeared so mysteriously once before; I recognised every detail of her dress; I even noticed it more accurately than the first time—for instance, I recollected observing that here and there the short tufty fringe of her shawl was stuck together, instead of hanging smoothly and evenly all round. I looked up at her face. I cannot now describe the features beyond saying that the whole face was refined and pleasing, and that in the expression there was certainly nothing to alarm or repel. It was rather wistful and beseeching, the look in the eyes anxious, the lips slightly parted, as if she were on the point

of speaking. I have since thought that if I had spoken, if I could have spoken—for I did make one effort to do so, but no audible words would come at my bidding—the spell that bound the poor soul, this mysterious wanderer from some shadowy borderland between life and death, might have been broken, and the message that I now believe burdened her delivered. Sometimes I wish I could have done it; but then, again—oh no! a voice from those unreal lips would have been too awful—flesh and blood could not have stood it. For another instant I kept my eyes fixed upon her without moving; then there came over me at last with an awful thrill, a sort of suffocating gasp of horror, the consciousness, the actual realisation of the fact that this before me, this presence, was no living human being, no dweller in our familiar world, not a woman, but a ghost! Oh, it was an awful moment! I pray that I may never again endure another like it. There is something so indescribably frightful in the feeling that we are on the verge of being tried beyond what we can bear, that ordinary conditions are slipping away from under us, that in another moment reason or life itself must snap with the strain; and all these feelings I then underwent. At last I moved, moved backwards from the figure. I dared not attempt to pass her. Yet I could not at first turn away from her. I stepped backwards, facing her still as I did so, till I was close to the fireplace. Then I turned sharply from her, sat down again on the low chair still standing by the hearth, resolutely forcing myself to gaze into the fire, which was blazing cheerfully, though conscious all the time of a terrible fascination urging me to look round again to the middle of the room. Gradually, however, now that I no longer saw her, I began a little to recover myself. I tried to bring my sense and reason to bear on the matter. "This being," I said to myself, "whoever and whatever she is, cannot harm me. I am under God's protection as much at this moment as at any moment of my life. All creatures, even disembodied spirits, if there be such, and this among them, if it be one, are under His control. Why should I be afraid? I am being tried; my courage and trust are being tried to the utmost; let me prove them, let me keep my own self-respect, by mastering this cowardly, unreasonable terror." And after a time I began to feel stronger and surer of myself. Then I rose from my seat and turned towards the door again; and oh, the relief of seeing that the way was clear; my terrible visitor had disappeared! I hastened across the room, I passed the few steps of passage that lay between my door and the staircase, and hurried down the first flight in a sort of suppressed agony of eagerness to find myself again safe in the living human companionship of my mother and sisters in the cheerful drawing-room below. But my trial was not yet over, indeed it seemed to me afterwards that it had only now reached its height; perhaps the strain on my nervous system was now beginning to tell, and my powers of endurance were all but exhausted. I cannot say if it was so or not. I can only say that my agony of terror, of horror, of absolute fear, was far past describing in words, when, just as I reached the little landing at the foot of the first short staircase, and was on the point of running down the longer flight still before me, I saw again, coming slowly up the steps, as if to meet me, the ghostly figure of the old woman. It was too much. I was reckless by this time; I could not stop. I rushed down the staircase, brushing past the figure as I went: I use the word intentionally—I did brush past her, I felt her. This part of my experience was I believe, quite at variance with the sensations of orthodox ghost-seers; but I am really telling you all I was conscious of. Then I hardly remember anything more; my agony broke out at last in a loud shrill cry, and I suppose I fainted. I only know that when I recovered my senses, I was in the drawing-room, on the sofa, surrounded by my terrified mother and sisters. But it was not for some time that I could find voice or courage to tell them what had happened to me; for some days I was on the brink of a serious illness, and for long afterwards I could not endure to be left alone, even in the broadest daylight."

Lady Farquhar stopped. I fancied, however, from her manner that there was more to tell, so I said nothing; and in a minute or two she went on speaking.

"We did not stay long at Ballyreina after this. I was not sorry to leave it; but still, before the time came for us to do so, I had begun to recover from the most painful part of the impression left upon me by my strange adventure. And when I was at home again, far from the place where it had happened, I gradually lost the feeling of horror altogether, and remembered it only as a very curious and inexplicable experience. Now and then, even, I did not shrink from talking about it, generally, I think, with a vague hope that somehow, some time or other, light might be thrown upon it. Not that I ever expected, or could have believed it possible, that the supernatural character of the adventure could be explained away; but I always had a misty fancy that sooner or later I should find out something about my old lady, as we came to call her; who she had been and what her history was."

"And did you?" I asked eagerly.

"Yes, I did," Margaret answered. "To some extent, at least, I learnt the explanation of what I had seen. This was how it was: nearly a year after we had left Ireland I was staying with one of my aunts, and one evening some young people who were also visiting her began to talk about ghosts, and my aunt, who had heard something of the story from my mother, begged

me to tell it all. I did tell it, just as I have now told it to you. When I had finished, an elderly lady who was present, and who had listened very attentively, surprised me a little by asking the name of the house where it happened. "Was it Ballyreina?" she said. I answered, "Yes," wondering how she knew it, for I had not mentioned it.

"Then I can tell you whom you saw," she exclaimed; "it must have been one of the old Miss Fitzgeralds—the eldest one. The description suits her exactly."

"I was quite puzzled. We had never heard of any Fitzgeralds at Ballyreina. I said so to the lady, and asked her to explain what she meant. She told me all she knew. It appeared there had been a family of that name for many generations at Ballyreina. Once upon a time—a long-ago once upon a time—the Fitzgeralds had been great and rich; but gradually one misfortune after another had brought them down in the world, and at the time my informant heard about them the only representatives of the old family were three maiden ladies already elderly. Mrs. Gordon, the lady who told me all this, had met them once, and had been much impressed by what she heard of them. They had got poorer and poorer, till at last they had to give up the struggle, and sell, or let on a long lease, their dear old home, Ballyreina. They were too proud to remain in their own country after this, and spent the rest of their lives on the Continent, wandering about from place to place. The most curious part of it was that nearly all their wandering was actually on foot. They were too poor to afford to travel much in the usual way, and yet, once torn from their old associations, the travelling mania seized them; they seemed absolutely unable to rest. So on foot, and speaking not a word of any language but their own, these three desolate sisters journeyed over a great part of the Continent. They visited most of the principal towns, and were well known in several. I daresay they are still remembered at some of the places they used to stay at, though never for more than a short time together. Mrs. Gordon had met them somewhere, I forget where, but it was many years ago. Since then she had never heard of them; she did not know if they were alive or dead; she was only certain that the description of my old lady was exactly like that of the eldest of the sisters, and that the name of their old home was Ballyreina. And I remember her saying, 'If ever a heart was buried in a house, it was that of poor old Miss Fitzgerald.'

"That was all Mrs. Gordon could tell me," continued Lady Farquhar; "but it led to my learning a little more. I told my brother what I had heard. He used often at that time to be in Ireland on business; and to satisfy me, the next time he went he visited the village of Ballyreina again, and in one way and another he found out a few particulars. The house, you remember, had been let to us by a Captain Marchmont. He, my brother discovered, was not the owner of the place, as we had naturally imagined, but only rented it on a very long lease from some ladies of the name of Fitzgerald. It had been in Captain Marchmont's possession for a great many years at the time he let it to us, and the Fitzgeralds, never returning there even to visit it, had come to be almost forgotten. The room with the old fashioned furniture had been reserved by the owners of the place to leave some of their poor old treasures in—relics too cumbersome to be carried about with them in their strange wanderings, but too precious, evidently, to be parted with. We, of course, never could know what may not have been hidden away in some of the queer old bureaux I told you of. Family papers of importance, perhaps; possibly some ancient love-letters, forgotten in the confusion of their leave-taking; a lock of hair, or a withered flower, perhaps, that she my poor old lady, would fain have clasped in her hand when dying, or have had buried with her. Ah, yes; there must be many a pitiful old story that is never told."

Lady Farquhar stopped and gazed dreamily and half sadly into the fire.

"Then Miss Fitzgerald was dead when you were at Ballyreina?" I asked.

Margaret looked up with some surprise.

"Did I not say so?" she exclaimed. "That was the point of most interest in what my brother discovered. He could not hear the exact date of her death, but he learnt with certainty that she was dead—had died, at Geneva I think, some time in the month of March in the previous year; the same month, March '55, in which I had twice seen the apparition at Ballyreina."

This was my friend's ghost story.

A NEW WEATHER VANE.—The old weather-cock has three essential faults; it indicates a direction when there is a dead calm, it gives no means of learning the force of the wind, while it fails to show the true course of the same, by exhibiting merely its horizontal component. M. Tany proposes the arrangement to be attached to the ordinary lightning rod, just above a suitable shoulder on the latter is placed a copper ring, grooved and made into a pulley easily rotated in a horizontal plane. Around this passes a knotted cord, the ends of which are secured to the extremities of a short stick or metal rod, to which is secured a simple streamer. Thus constructed, the vane indicates a calm by falling vertically, and besides shows the strength of the wind by being blown out more or less from the lightning rod. As is evident, it is capable of motion in every direction, so that if there exist in the wind an upward tending vertical component, the same will be shown.

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THE FAVORITE

MONTREAL, SATURDAY, JAN. 10, 1874.

NOTICE TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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No notice will be taken of contributions unaccompanied by the name and address of the writer (not necessarily for publication,) and the Editor will not be responsible for their safe keeping.

EXCUSES.

Very old excuses are sometimes put forward in courts of justice. A French Republican condemned to death for murdering his wife and child without extenuating circumstances, demurred to the sentence, because capital punishment had been abolished in France for political offences, and he had killed his wife and child for no other reason but because they were Legitimists. An Irishman accused of perpetrating a bigamous marriage, justified the act on the ground that he was not a consenting party at his first wedding; the friends of the lady who claimed him for her own, having carried him before a priest one night, and married him spite of his resistance! A thief charged with stealing a Bible, pleaded he had been led away by his pious propensities. At Liverpool, a publican, summoned for having sundry false measures in his possession, declared he only used them for those who got drunk upon credit; and a greengrocer excused his use of a false beam because new potatoes were so dear, that he could make no profit out of them unless he cheated his customers a little. A witness told the judge he must not speak so quickly, as it was impossible for him to follow him, replied: "I can't help it, my lord; I've got an impediment in my speech; I had it since I was born!" Another charge by the examining counsel with prevaricating, asked how he could help prevaricating, when he has lost three of his front teeth! This witness must surely have been own brother to the gentleman who, using the wine at a public dinner not wisely but too well, was called to order for indulging in language more free than polite. "I beg pardon," said he, "I did not mean to say what I did say; but I have had the misfortune to lose some of my front teeth, and words got out every now and then without my knowledge." We do not suppose an army was ever yet defeated without plenty of proof being forthcoming that it ought to have been victorious, but it would be hard to beat the way in which a Yankee, bragging of his countrymen's warlike achievements, disposed of the Englishman's reminder that they got the worst of it at

Long Island. "Well, yes," said he, "you did whip us there; but then, you see in that battle the Americans somehow didn't seem to take any interest in the fight." This was as pure an invention as the story with which Dr. Chalmers' aunt averted the punctuality-loving doctor's wrath, when she came down late to breakfast. She laid the blame of her bedkeeping upon a dream, exclaiming, before he had time to speak, "Oh, Mr. Chalmers, I had such a strange dream; I dreamt that you were dead! I dreamt that the funeral-day was named, the hour fixed, the funeral cards sent out. Then the day came, the folk came, and the hour came; but what do you think happen'd? Why, the clock had scarce done chapping twelve, the time named in the invitations, when a loud knocking was heard inside the coffin, and a voice came out of it, saying, 'Twelve's chappit, and ye're no liftin'!'" Both these ingenious excuses lacked the basis of probability, without which no excuse can be held to be a good one, and therefore cannot contest the palm with Barham's apologetic explanation, when called to account by his college tutor for his absence from morning chapel. "The fact is, sir, you are too late for me; I cannot sit up till seven o'clock in the morning. I am a man of regular habits, and unless I get to bed by four or five at latest, I am fit for nothing next day!" This deserves bracketing with Charles Lamb's well-known justification of his late appearance in Leadenhall-street: "You must remember, sir, I am always the first to leave!" Quaint excuses were quite in Eli's way. When a correspondent of the *London Magazine* claimed the London temple for a Wiltshire man and a brother, Elia repudiated the construction put upon his words. "By the word 'native,' I may be supposed to mean a town where I might have been born, or where it might be desirable that I should have been born, as being situated in wholesome air, upon a dry, chalky soil, in which I delight; or a town with the inhabitants of which I passed some weeks, a summer or two ago, so agreeably, that they and it became in a manner native to me. Without some such latitude of interpretation, I see not how we can avoid falling into a gross error in physics, as to conceive that a gentleman may be born in two places, from which all modern and ancient testimony is alike abhorrent." Having said this much in explanation, Lamb adds (let clever folk who think to bolster up their theory of an author's private life by internal evidence, ponder his words), that he hath not so fixed his nativity—like a rusty vane—to one dull spot, but that, if he sees occasion, or the argument demands it, he will be born again, in future papers, in whatever place, and whatever period, shall seem good unto him.

THE PLOTTING MAID.

A good deal has been said about the unsophisticated thoughtlessness which is peculiar to youth. At one time the belief was current that if young people had not their elders to look after them, things would get into an exceedingly bad state. Young men were supposed to be such generous, pleasure-seeking, unreflecting beings, that they would continually be ruining themselves in their endeavours to minister to the pleasures of their associates and to their own, if they were not restrained by those of mature years, whose experience had taught them how certain dangers were to be guarded against; while maidens were considered to be so remarkable innocent, confiding, and uncalculating that, if left to themselves, they would be guilty even of that imprudent act of marrying for love, when there was a very strong probability that those with whom they united their destinies would be unable to decently maintain even a cottage of the sort in which lovers have been in the habit of imagining they could be so supremely happy. This sort of thing has, with the progress of time and the march of civilization, been improved upon. The young man and the maiden of the type indicated are now very seldom to be met with. So successfully has unnecessary sentiment been stifled, and so thoroughly practical is the present age, that it is not often young men are found sacrificing themselves even for the sake of their best friends and marrying into a sphere of society very much beneath them.

When the youth, who has been taught to consider himself much better than the majority of those by whom he is surrounded, becomes amorously inclined towards a damsel who is not, socially, his equal, the idea of matrimony is about the very last thing which enters his prudent head. Nor are loving parents very much troubled by their daughters showing a dangerous partiality for gallants who, if they have anything to recommend them, have, certainly, not riches. There are nowadays very few unequal marriages, which is a good thing, seeing that such matches, as a rule, fail to turn out satisfactorily. Weddings are led up to in a very matter-of-fact style, and conducted in an exceedingly decorous, if pro-

saic, manner. They are quite in keeping with the spirit of the age, which is sternly practical, and has affection only for that which has a real and a visible existence, and possesses a marketable value. Such a condition of things as that indicated is highly favorable to the development of the character and talents of the plotting maid. She may, indeed, be said to be the embodiment of the spirit of the age.

The plotting maid enters upon the business of life with the firm conviction that if she is to achieve success she must do something for herself. In the first place she must, admitting that she has one, subjugate her heart to her judgment. That done, the remainder of her task is easy. Of course, a "good" marriage is the height of her ambition; by a good marriage being understood one which involves large settlements upon her. She is perfectly aware, even at a tender age—thanks to the manner in which she has learned the lessons which have been set her by those who have had charge of her education—that though she may become tired of her husband, whom she never particularly cared for, there is a strong probability that a richly furnished and well-appointed mansion and a liberal allowance of pin-money will never pall upon her. She knows that, in order to obtain the object of her ambition, she must consent to humor and captivate that strange, stupid animal, man. This, if she possesses moderate attainments, is a task by no means difficult of accomplishment. Even if she has defects, they may, with very little trouble, be cleverly veiled, if not altogether hidden from sight. Is her complexion faulty, she has but to call in the aid of certain individuals who will enable her to make it look well, so long as it is not subjected to a too close scrutiny; if she has indifferent hair, nothing is simpler than for her to wear somebody else's; and an angular figure may be made into a fairly graceful one by a deft dress-maker. It is not necessary for the plotting maiden to be excessively clever. Indeed, she has all the more chance of success if she does not talk too rapidly herself. Man is a vain creature, who likes nothing so much as hearing his own tongue wagging. He is generally fonder of talking himself than listening to other people; and it is a fact which has probably not escaped the notice of the plotting maiden, that the surest way to his favor is to listen with an air of great interest to all that he says. If a woman monopolizes more than what he considers is her share of a conversation, many a man begins to think that she is rather too clever, and that his wisest plan is to have as little as possible to do with her. So that, even if a woman, who is desirous of securing the favor of a man, has considerable conversational power, she does well not to exercise it too freely. As for the one who is not largely endowed with the talking faculty, it is a simple matter for her to hide her deficiency. Nothing is easier for her than to make a few approving speeches to encourage that male, who flatters himself he is entertaining her, to make still higher oratorical flights, and thereby induce him to think better of himself and better of her. She can smile upon him; call her eyes into requisition; and do many other things which are very effective.

Any one who has taken the trouble to watch the plotting maiden is painfully aware that she practises her powers to some purpose. She does so with considerable judgment. Marriageable men are the recipients of her favors. Youngsters who, there is reason to believe, will have to wait some time before they are in a position to enter upon the nuptial state, or regarded by her with calm indifference; while those unhappy mortals whose social status is somewhat doubtful and who are not generally believed to be the possessors of much of this world's treasure are looked at with absolute contempt. She shows, time after time, that it is not worth her while to waste any words upon them, and that she conceives she is guilty of an astonishing piece of condescension in consenting to notice them at all. Somehow or other she is remarkably clever at getting to know what a man is, and what are its prospects; and her behavior towards him, in plain terms, is regulated by the weight of his money bags.

It sometimes happens that success does not attend the effort of the plotting maid. The game which she attempts to trap proves that it is not to be caught by chaff, in other words, her assumed innocence is seen through, her "gush" is taken for what it is worth, and her marked favoritism for certain happy individuals attributed to the correct cause. This is not surprising. Indeed, it is somewhat astonishing that those dear girls—dear in more senses than one—who make a point of flirting only with rich men (but flirting, when they do so, in the most pronounced manner) are not more frequently unmasked. No one can feel regret when failure attends their efforts. Prudence is commendable, no doubt; but they are something more than prudent, they are mercenary and snobbish to the last degree. They are utterly selfish, and dead to all the best emotions.

NEWS NOTES.

THE Spanish insurgents have suffered a severe defeat.

THE health of Emperor William of Germany is much improved.

THE Duke of Edinburgh has arrived at Berlin, en route for St. Petersburg.

MARSHAL Bazaine has left Versailles for the Island of Saint Marguerite.

THE municipal authorities of Madrid have been suspended from office.

FRANCOIS HUGO, a son of Victor Hugo died lately in Paris, aged 45 years.

THERE are many very bad cases of typhoid fever reported at Sing Sing prison.

A FURTHER reduction in the number of hands in the Charleston Navy Yard has been made.

THE cattle plague has broken out in Madeira, and cattle going thence to the Gold Coast are infected.

A New York *Herald* special from Madrid says the resignation of General Sickles has been accepted.

THE Assembly at Versailles have voted the raising of eighty millions of francs by increased taxation.

It is reported in Cuba that General Burriel has been relieved of the command of the eastern department of the Island.

EDSON BRADLEY, the Broadway merchant, who, it is said, fled to Canada with \$75,000, is safely lodged in gaol on the other side.

PRESIDENT Grant is said to have declared in conversation with a friend that he will not consent to be a candidate for the third term.

THREE late arrivals in Washington of the Polaris Expedition were examined by Secretary Robson, but nothing particular was elicited.

THE strike of railroad engineers on many of the American lines still continues, and rumors are current of a general strike on all the roads.

THE United States steamer "Junata," from Santiago de Cuba, with 102 survivors of the steamer "Virginius," arrived in New York on Saturday week.

LATELY the steamer "Gipsy Queen" struck a sunken lighter in the River Tyne, England, and sunk. There were between 50 and 60 persons on board. Of these only 20 were rescued.

A MEETING of the Polaris survivors has been held in New York to appeal to Congress for additional compensation, their health being badly broken by the sufferings they have undergone.

ORDERS have been issued from the United States Navy Department to discontinue recruiting at the depots which were opened on the commencement of the threatened complications with Spain.

THE reports which have been telegraphed from Bayonne that the troops in Biscay under the command of General Lome had pronounced in favor of Alphonso are officially declared to be without foundation.

THERE has been a complete rupture between Castelar and the President of the Spanish Cortes. The success of the Government, however, is considered certain, while London despatches from Madrid report the situation in the latter city to be very serious.

THE Bank of British North America, the Bank of Montreal, and the Canadian Bank of Commerce, having declined to pay the New York State tax Judge Barrett has decided that as they received the protection of the laws of the State they are liable to taxation.

It is believed that Senor Castelar will have a majority in the Cortes, and that this is insured to him by the support of Senor Figueras. The Madrid *Imparcial* says the insurgents of Cartagena are preparing to fly from the city, and are getting a fleet of vessels ready for that purpose.

MADRID despatches say that on the meeting of the Cortes, Serrano is to be placed at the head of Spanish affairs. The Powers are pledged to recognize him as they have recognized the President of the French Republic, and will intervene in the case of the Reds opposing the appointment.

It is stated upon trustworthy authority that two Cuban insurgents have 6,000 men concentrated in the mountains, around Puerto Principe, under General Garcia, and will soon make a descent upon that place. Raids upon plantations will now commence, as the gathering of the sugar cane soon begins.

THE port authorities at New York were much astonished to see the "Ossipee" without her charge, the "Virginius." This latter vessel has been in a leaky and unseaworthy condition all along, and in spite of every effort on the part of the crew, foundered off St. Jean. The officers of the "Ossipee" refuse to give any information concerning the matter.

ST. NORAH was a poor girl, and came to England to service. Sweet-tempered and gentle, she seemed to love everything she spoke to. And she prayed to St. Patrick that he would give her a good gift that would make her not proud, but useful; and St. Patrick, out of his own head, taught St. Norah how to boil a potato. A sad thing, and to be lamented, that the secret has come down to so few.

I THINK OF THEE.

I think of thee when, soft and low,
The zephyr sighs along the vale,
Or when the sunset's golden glow
Lights up the hill and flowery dale.

I think of thee when all is lone
And silent o'er the grassy lea;
And when the howling storm is gone,
I think of thee, I think of thee.

I think of thee, when clear and light,
The moon has hung her lamp on high,
And hope, a bride arrayed in white,
Is smiling in the azure sky.

I think of thee, when morn illumines
The rosy sky with floods of light;
And the little bird its song resumes
Upon the mountain's rocky height.

I think of thee, when far away,
Upon life's wild and stormy sea;
Or when I mingle with the gay—
I think of thee—I think of thee.

JOHN SALTRAM'S WIFE.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.

When I first knew Saltram, we were both boys at Rugby together; more years ago than I care to count now. He was in the form above me. He has been in the form above me pretty well through life—but that is by the way. I don't like playing second to most men, but then I love Saltram more than most, and knocking under to him is not unpleasant. After we left Rugby, we both entered at Exeter College. I came out fourth at the examinations, and he was senior wrangler. I remember telling him it was his old luck, and clapping him on the back in an ecstatic manner, while he was reading a letter as coolly as possible. When he had done, he looked up, just a little paler than usual, and said: "You'll have to do without me at the supper, Charlie. My father died yesterday, and I am summoned home."

That was the last I saw of Saltram for some time. His father had been a country magnate, and had left him a large estate. Mine was a London parson, not over-well to do. He had sent me to college, though, and I was to be a doctor; so, after leaving Exeter, I went to walk the hospitals; and though I wrote to, and heard from Saltram frequently at first, we were both too busy for a very extensive correspondence; and beyond an occasional line of good-will, our communications soon died out altogether.

It was at Paris that I next met him. I had gone over there to study at the Musée; and one summer evening we came across one another on the Boulevards, by the flower-market. It was two years since we had met, and the place was crowded with people bent on business or pleasure, but I knew Saltram's long limbs and square determined jaw at once, and stopped him with a glad word of recognition. He started at first, for he was walking along as if in deep thought, and looked up with a truly British scowl, black enough to frighten most men; but when he saw who it was that had grasped him by the shoulder, the frown died out, and we shook hands as joyously on his side as on mine—more so, indeed, for, after a minute, he said: "You'll hardly believe it, Charlie, but I can't help fancying you must have dropped out of Heaven, for I was just wishing for you as I came along here. To think of your being in Paris!"

"The wonder is to see you," I retorted. "I have been grinding away here at operations and amputations for the last ten weeks. You don't want an arm or a leg taken off, do you?"

"Not exactly," he said, laughing. "I do want your services though, and this very night, if possible. Will you come?"

"Anywhere you like, old fellow. What is it?"

"Not a cutting asunder of anything," he answered, still smiling in his grave way; "rather a putting together. I am going to be married, Charlie."

"The deuce you are!" I said, not very politely; but I was rather taken aback. I did not want to lose my friend just as I had found him; and I say what you will, one always does lose a friend when he's married. "The ceremony does not take place at night, does it?"

"No; to-morrow morning. I am going to try to run away with the lady to-night, though."

He said it so coolly that I was fairly startled out of speech, and just stared at him by way of reply; nor did he say any more then, but took my arm, and walked me off to one of the bridges hard by, where he sat down on a stone bench overlooking the water, and made me follow his example.

"I'll tell you all about it here," he said, speaking very deliberately. "You see, I came over to Paris to assist at my cousin Miss Bartram's marriage. Lady Bartram had been living here for some time, to be near the two younger girls, who are being educated at a convent; and as Emily got engaged to some Frenchman about the court, I agreed to come over and see her turned into Madame la Marquise de— I really forget what. Helene, that is the girl I am going to marry—is a sort of connection of the Bartrams, just seventeen, and half English. I'm not going to say anything about her appearance; you will see her for yourself. I met her at the convent first. I went with Lady Bartram to see

my cousins; and she was asked for too, and allowed to come in the parlor."

"She is not a nun, is she?" I asked, rather scandalised.

"Nun! No!" was the prompt reply. "She is being finished, as they call it, at the convent, and taken care of until Mr. le Baron de Montigny is ready to marry her. My dear Charlie, do not look so bewildered. Helene and I do not intend to trouble the Baron this time.—What was I saying? Oh, our first meeting! I fell in love with her before it was over; so you may judge whether she is fascinating or not. She was one of Emily's bridesmaids after that; and when I stood by her in the church, I made up my mind that, God willing, she should kneel with me at the altar one day as my wife. I asked her that night. I'm not going to tell you all she said, only 'No' did not form any part of it; but she owned she was very much surprised, and gave me but small hopes of winning her father's consent. I called on him next morning. I hate shilly-shallying over anything; and when I've made up my mind to a piece of work, I like to do it right away. Unfortunately, Helen's father was of rather similar opinions. We might have been brothers in some things; and we disliked each other as heartily as only some brothers do. He asked me if I knew his daughter was promised to Mr. le Baron de Montigny. I said 'Yes'; but as Helene did not love the Baron, and did love me, I thought the former gentleman would hardly press his claims. He just snapped his snuffy old fingers at that, and asked: 'Mr. Saltram has French blood in him?'"

"Not a drop," said I curtly.

"He brought one finger down on the table, and said quietly: 'Mr. le Baron is all French.'"

"I suggested that as Helene's mother had been an English-woman, that ought not to be weighed. He checked me by a gesture, and asked again: 'Monsieur is noble?'"

"No."

"Another finger down, and the same gentle tone: 'Mr. le Baron is allied to royalty, and is the nineteenth in a direct line to carry the De Montigny crest.'"

"I shrugged my shoulders. Another question followed: 'What is Monsieur's rente?'"

"Twelve hundred a year, more or less."

"A third finger down. Even that did not content him: 'Mr. le Baron has fifteen hundred rente. Ah, ça! might one ask, is Monsieur a Catholic?'"

"No; but Helene would be free to—"

"He stopped me by holding up the four fingers: 'Enough, Monsieur Saltram. You are doubtless a worthy young man. I esteem you. I esteem your cousin, Lady Bartram; but Helene will not be your wife.'"

"Why not, sir?"

"Monsieur, you are not French; you are not noble; you have less money than M. le Baron, who is both French and noble, and to whom my daughter is already promised. *De plus*, you are a heretic; and no child of mine shall marry save with a son of the church. *Allons; c'en est fini*. I wish you a good-morning."

"Now, Charlie, what would you do with a man like that! I tried remonstrances, arguments, even entreaties. He was like a nail, only twice as hard; and what was more, he found out that I persisted in meeting Helene, and so sent her back to the convent, which she had left for good two days before Emily's wedding. We have met again since; but he has not found that out yet. Mr. le Baron is away at Cannes with his sovereign; and Helene's papa is having her wedding-clothes made, and settlements drawn out, that all may be ready for her marriage when the *fiancé* returns, which will be next week."

"And you, Saltram?" I asked wonderingly.

"I have been over to Dover, and taken out a special license for the marriage of John Saltram, bachelor, and Helene Despuys, spinster; and Nellie has got the key of the garden gate to-night."

When he called her Nellie, I realised how he loved the girl; his voice altered and softened; and his stern, handsome face glowed all over; but I, who was not in love, took a different view of the subject-matter, and said gravely: "My dear John, forgive me; but is not this rather an imprudent affair? Would it not be better to await and soften the father?"

"Not to be done, Charlie!"

"The lover, then!"

"Sticks to his rights like a leech."

"But, my dear fellow, surely if Miss Despuys says him nay?"

"Nelly! why, she is only seventeen, I tell you; and her father could pester, and bully, and torture her for four mortal years before she would even be at liberty to say 'Nay.' Do you think I would expose her to that? Do you think I would submit to let her—my Helene—be persecuted, fawned on, and courted by another man?"

The sudden fierceness with which he uttered the last words, the black grimness of his face, taught me another thing: John Saltram was a very jealous man. How jealous, I learnt better later on. In the end, I left off trying to shake his determination, and merely asked for my orders. Before nightfall, I received them. Miss Despuys was to feign headache, and go to her room early. At a quarter to eight, I was to be at the garden-gate, opening into a little back street, the Rue Petit Pierre. She would come out: I was to put her into a *fiacre*, and drive to the railway station, Saltram having got me the tickets, so as to insure there being no delay. We should catch the night-mail, and be in Dover before dawn. Meanwhile, he was to dine at the Bartram's, where M. Despuys was also

dining (he did not like this part of the business), sleep, and remain there till eleven next morning, in case of any search or inquiry being made. Finally, he would take the mid-day train and join us as speedily as might be. Lady Bartram was not in the plot, but Emily was, and had promised to send her maid with Helene, and throw all inquiries off the search as cleverly as could be.

It was all mapped out before two o'clock that afternoon. The *femme de chambre* went off to the station to await us; and by a quarter to eight, I was at the garden-gate of the convent, as directed. I had never been engaged in anything so romantic before; and remembering how hastily everything had been arranged, as also the old adage, "The course of true love never did run smooth," I had not the smallest expectation that the affair would succeed.

I was wrong. There was not one hitch from beginning to end. Before I had been two minutes at the gate, it opened; and a young lady came out, attired very simply in a dark blue silk dress and straw hat. She carried a waterproof cloak over her arm, and said inquiringly, "Saltram?" I said "John." That was the signal agreed upon; and then I put her in the *fiacre*, and we drove to the station, hardly one word being exchanged on the way. My heart beat very fast, I know; and my companion's breath came in little hard gasps. That ten minutes seemed a very long one.

The maid met us about a hundred yards from the station. She carried a bundle, and got into the *fiacre*. Helene seemed very glad to see her, and they whispered together for about two minutes. Then I was told to shut my eyes, and of course obeyed. When I opened them again, I hardly knew the fair runaway. A black dress and mantle had been slipped over her blue costume. A widow's bonnet, with long crape veil, replaced the little flat hat, and the latter was hidden among the folds of the waterproof. After dismissing the *fiacre*, we crossed the platform separately. Helene and the maid got into a carriage first; and I followed, after a minute or two, without seeming to belong to them. Fortunately, we were alone in the compartment, and as we steamed away out of sight of the station, Helene threw back her veil, and said: "We are safe now, Dr. Elliott, are we not?" She spoke very pure English, and was a very innocent, beautiful-looking girl, with large blue eyes, and almost black eyebrows and hair. I was glad for Saltram's sake, to see his bride was beautiful. I was glad, too, that she seemed so cheerful. She laughed like a child when she told me that Marie Vernet had brought the clothes at her suggestion, to distract attention from her appearance; and prattled on about her sham illness and the sympathy of kind Sister Bernadine, who adored her, and who would want to sit with her and bathe her head. "Poor sister Bernadine!" she exclaimed with a sudden moistening of the eyes; then brightening: "Mais enfin, que voulez-vous?" Also she was very eager to hear of Saltram, what he had said, and how he looked; and she went into a fit of laughter at the idea of his dining demurely opposite to her father. In fact, she was so free from shyness or embarrassment, that she seemed a perfect child; and I almost wondered at Saltram, who was grave and reserved for his age, having fallen in love with such a little sprite; and yet her manner was so naively winning, her face so sweetly bright, I could not wonder long.

We crossed over without any mischance; and I took Helene and Mrs. Vernet to a quiet inn just outside the town, where John had engaged rooms. We were sitting in the parlor there that evening, and I was just saying that it would be time for me to go down to the port to see if he had arrived, in a few minutes, when the door opened, and in he came, Helene rose, blushing, and held out her hands, saying: "Mon ami, John!" in a tone of shy delight; but Saltram strode across the room, and took her straight into his arms; and when I saw the fair beautiful face sobbing on his shoulder, and the lithe, beautiful form panting in his arms, I went quietly away, and smoked a pipe in the porch. I don't think they missed me. I did not mean to go back at all; but in three-quarters of an hour or so, I heard a clear girl-voice above me say, "The poor doctor, where is he?" And then John's head was pushed out of the window, and I was hailed with: "Charlie, boy, where have you gone? Come up and have some tea."

They were married next morning. I gave Helene away, and Mrs. Vernet was witness. Nothing intervened to disturb the ceremony, and I don't think I ever saw a happier pair. Helene looked dazzlingly lovely; and when, an hour later, she nodded me a farewell from the deck of the steamer, *en route* for Italy, I thought her face looked like that of an angel. John was standing at her side then, his arm round her waist, as he shouted: "Good-bye, Charlie. God bless you old boy. We shall never forget your kindness. Good-bye!"

I did not see Saltram or his wife for a long time after this. I heard from them, of course. John wrote from Italy, not saying much about his wife's perfections or his own happiness; that was not his way; but nevertheless allowing both to be very clearly apparent. He told me of M. Despuys's unappeasable wrath; of how he had cut his daughter's name out of his will, and refused to see her or her husband under any pretext. After that he wrote from his country-seat in Yorkshire, to say they had settled down there for good; and that I must pay them a visit soon, if only out of compassion for Nellie, who, he feared, found English country-life rather dull after Naples.

I did not go down to Yorkshire; I was a great deal too busy; but I felt rather sorry for that last line in John's letter. I did not think he would have put it in unless the fair Helene had shown some symptoms of the dullness he deprecated. It was a long, long while after this before I heard from Saltram again. My own love-affair rather took up my attention for the next year or so; and though it ended in smoke—for she married some one else—I did not think so much of Saltram during its duration as formerly. One day however, I called on Lady Bartram professionally; she was living then in London; and there I heard much of my friend.

"A most unhappy marriage," Lady Bartram said; "the greatest mistake John ever made! And yet I can hardly blame Helene either. She is such a child, so thoughtless and light-hearted, and John always was very grave, and terribly jealous. I daresay you know that."

I did know it. I loved John Saltram as well as Jonathan love David; but my love was not blind, and I knew him to be faulty in some things, as he was irreproachable in others. He was a man of impulse—one to make up his mind on the spur of the moment, as in the case of his marriage; yet unlike most impulsive people, he seldom or never wavered from his original idea, but carried it out with as much rigid pertinacity as though it had been the fruit of long years of reflection. This made him a dangerous man to deal with.

He was the very soul of honour; deceit of any kind was absolutely repulsive to him. I believe his marriage was the first instance in which he had ever set himself to outwit another; and he was unrelentingly hard on deception in any one else. Perfectly constant himself in his likes and dislikes, he had neither tolerance nor pity for caprice in others, and, though as warm-hearted and generous as a man can be, he was as jealous as Queen Eleanor. So much my friendship with John Saltram had taught me.

I think it must have been three years later when I next heard of him. I was parish surgeon then in a very populous part of London, and my time was engaged day and night. Still, when I got a note from Saltram one morning asking me to dine with him at the Alexandra Hotel, Paddington, that day I told my assistant he must attend to any evening cases, and went off right gladly to see my old friend.

He was very much changed; I saw that at a glance. There were one or two deep scores across his forehead, which made him look far older than his years. His face and hands had grown thinner, too, and his expression became so stern and hard, I hardly knew him. Still he seemed very glad to see me, reproached me for not having written, and seemed so heartily interested in my professional career, that it was not for some minutes I found space to ask: "Are you up in town alone, Saltram?"

"Yes; but only for a week. I am going to Egypt on the tenth."

"And Mrs. Saltram—she go with you, of course? I hope she is quite well, and as blooming as ever, John?"

"I hope so. I cannot tell you, however, as I have not seen her for the last eighteen months."

He spoke with curt harshness. I suppose I looked the astonishment I felt, for, after a minute, he said in the same voice: "My wife has left me, Elliott. I thought you might have heard."

"Left you! O John, my dear old boy, you don't mean that really—not for good?"

"Does a wife ever leave her husband for good?" he asked with bitter emphasis. "There, Elliott, don't let us speak about it. If you are very curious on the subject, I will tell you all I know, once for all. I differed with Mrs. Saltram as to certain items in her conduct. She preferred her own way. I remonstrated, first mildly, without avail; then severely. Next day, she left me. I received a letter from her on the day but one following, informing me that she had gone back to her father, and did not intend to return to my house any more. I wrote to M. Despuys to let him know that as long as she lived under his roof, or, indeed, respectably anywhere, my bankers had orders to pay her three hundred a year. In return, I received a very rude letter from M. Despuys, to the effect, that she had never been near him, nor did he know aught about her. That is all; and enough, I think."

"But Saltram," I exclaimed, shocked and distressed beyond words both at the story and the coldly contemptuous way in which my friend had related it, "might there not be some mistake? Did you make no inquiries for her? Think how young she is. Something might have happened to her."

"Exactly what I thought," he said dryly. "I was a fool; but a man is apt to be foolish about his wife. I went to Paris, and was going to prosecute inquiries there, when—I saw her! She passed me in a *fiacre* as close as you are to me now. It was a lucky chance, was it not?"

"Don't talk to me in that way," I cried impatiently. "You will never make me believe that you are utterly indifferent to her—that beautiful blue-eyed girl who cried with joy when you took her in your arms at the little Dover inn four years ago. Difference in your opinions! Why, man, think of the difference in your age. How old were you when you married that little school-girl of seventeen? Seven-and-twenty almost, wasn't it? And you mean to say that you, who could work your will with me, or any other fellow, all your life, could not mould a simple, loving girl's opinions to yours! John, it's incredible."

"A fact, nevertheless," he said, helping him-

self to wine very coolly, "and one I would rather not discuss even with you, if you please, Elliott."

His manner was decisive enough to silence me at the time; but after an evening spent in chat pleasant and friendly enough, but throughout which an under-current of unutterable sadness and weariness on Saltram's part was never quite hidden, my heart warmed with the old boyish intimacy so much that I could not help referring to the forbidden subject.

"John, you may be angry with me for saying it, but I can't bear to see your life clouded in this way, and I do think you are to blame. I do indeed, old fellow. I've only your own story to go by; but judging by that, I can't think you are acting for your own happiness. Do you mind my telling you so?"

I had put my hand on his shoulder while speaking. He frowned, and bit his lip, but he did not shake it off, and after a minute he said: "I should be angry if it were any one but you, Charlie. I suppose you do care for me, though. I suppose, too, you'll force me to tell you what I had rather have kept to myself." He paused a minute, and the frown deepened on his brow. Then, in a sort of grating undertone: "My differences with Helene related to her behavior towards other men. I wearied her, and I suppose she found them more agreeable. She flirted openly, culpably. Finally, I found out that she was keeping up a secret correspondence with M. le Baron de Montigny."

"The lover who?"—I began, almost too grieved for speech. Saltram nodded.

"Ah! you understand my feelings now. This was the innocent school-girl, the wife whom I had loved and worshipped as though she were indeed the angel I thought her! It all came out at last, by the treachery of a servant-girl. A nice, dirty, disgraceful transaction for an honest English gentleman's house, eh? Of course, there was a scene. I was quiet enough, Heaven knows, nay, even indulgent; for I recollected her youth, and thought she might have sinned thoughtlessly; but I told her my mind plainly, and—she left me. When I started those first inquiries about her, I learned that she had been seen to enter the country railway station with a French gentleman. She arrived in London, and got into a cab with the same person. What need to ask more? It is sufficient to know one's self dishonored. One does not want to seek the details. Enough for me that she deceived me from first to last."

"I can hardly believe it," I said sadly. "So young, so pure as she looked. Why, I can almost see her frank, innocent smile now."

He smiled too—a bitter, scornful smile.

"Not too young to deceive even then, Elliott. It was she who planned all the details of our elopement. My clumsy idea, failing fair means, was simply to ask for her, and carry her off by force. Hers was far more skilful, and neatly planned. That innocent smile! Ah! I've seen it when she described how cleverly she outwitted those old nuns who loved her so dearly. She had known me for one fortnight; and she threw over her father, her best friends, everything, at my first words. I praised her for it then, Ah! well, it is a just punishment."

He said no more, neither did I. What was there to say? But going home, I thought within myself, how seldom we men are grateful or tolerant to faults, even when committed on our behalf. Those small deceits and trifling subterfuges which a lover often laughs over—nay, suggests, and even urges—do they not lie in his mind, and rise as stern witnesses against his wife's rectitude, the first time he has the smallest ground to suspect he has been cajoled or duped in the most trifling degree? Dearest Octavia may say what she will—and her words, viewed in her lover's eyes, look white as the sunlight—but Caesar's wife must stand even above suspicion itself.

I am not fond of moralising, but I wish the women would read this little paragraph. It might make some bonny little lassie say "No," when her lover suggests that mamma need not be told of this or that trifle; or that letters delivered to her maid are nicer than if put in the post-bag. Corydon will be very angry at the time, I allow; but he will have learned to respect and rely on his Phillis by the time he has won her for his wife.

CHAPTER II.

Saltram staid in town over the week. It was my doing. I could not bear him to go away with that bitter, misanthropical cloud folded round him. I gave myself one or two holidays, and persuaded him to take outings with me. I made him go to the opera and the theatres; and because he thought I enjoyed them, he would take tickets and go with me. He was always an unselfish fellow. One evening we went to the Gaiety. They had got a French company there just then, and were playing one of Offenbach's comic operettas—*Barbe Bleue*, I think. I don't care much for those sort of things, but I thought it would amuse Saltram, so I suggested going to see it. He only said: "What a theatre-loving fellow you are, Charlie!" but he came round later to tell me he had taken tickets for two, and would call for me.

We had capital seats in the dress-circle, right in front of the stage; and as, from the proportions of the theatre, every word is audible, one could not have had a better place. There was some slight little piece first; the *Quaker*, I think—a mere foam-ball of frivolity, but it made me laugh, and even Saltram smiled over its utter absurdity. Then *Barbe Bleue* began. I had gone to speak to some acquaintance in a box, and having been delayed by the lady, who,

with a woman's want of knowing the seasonableness of things, would enlarge on the enlargement of her youngest boy's tonsils, did not get back to my place till the first scene was nearly through. Then I looked, not at the stage, but at Saltram. His face had turned a dull, greenish white; his eyes were fixed; and the lines about his mouth rigid, as though he were in a fit.

"John," I said; "good Heavens! John, what is the matter?"

He did not seem to hear me, and I repeated the question, tapping him somewhat sharply on the arm. Then he said, never moving his eyes from the stage: "Look there!"

I looked, but saw nothing save Boulotte, the fish-girl, heroine of the piece, making vigorous love to the bashful marquis. Some people in the pit were laughing heartily at the actress's audacity. John's expression was hideous.

"Saltram," I said again, "what is it?"

"Don't you see," he retorted, turning his face with that terrible look on it to me. "The girl, the actress—my wife!"

I thought he was mad; but when I looked more narrowly at the frisky Boulotte, with her short petticoats, Normandy cap, and free manners, I started, and uttered an exclamation, which attracted the attention of two or three people near me. He was right. Those blue, laughing eyes, and curved lips, even the line of black, silky hair waving off the broad, low brow, never could belong to any but the one woman, Helene Saltram! My agitation recalled John to himself. The deadly pallor remained; but he looked cool and quiet as usual as he said: "Hush! you disturb the audience. A clever scene, is it not?"

"John," I said, wondering at the man still more, "let us go away. You can return and speak to her at the finish, if you like."

"Speak to her! To what end? My dear Elliott, can you not believe that this woman, ogling and leering at her fellow-mountebank here, is no more to me than any other wretched doll frisking through a ballet, or hanging about a theatre door outside. I made a fool of myself for a moment. Let it pass; and remember my wife is dead—dead and buried four years ago.—I do not think much of Offenbach's genius, do you?"

What was to be done with him? Nothing; and I knew it. We sat through the operetta and after-piece, and his attention never wavered once. Now and then, he even took up his opera-glass to see better, as any other looker-on might have done; and I sat beside him, looking at Boulotte, nothing else. Through all the red and white paint, I could see that she was thinner than she used to be. Her arms were childishly slender for her size, and her eyes looked larger; but that was all. For the rest, she was just Helene Despuys in the railway carriage, or Nellie Saltram smiling farewell from the steamboat; only four years older. It went to my heart to see her so. How Saltram could bear to look on as he did, I could not tell, but he looked his shame in the face, and disowned it as his.

After that evening, I found out that John used to go to the Gaiety night after night, as long as *Barbe Bleue* was being acted, and sit through it without speaking a word to any one. He still talked of going abroad, but it was only talk. I felt within myself that he would not go while his wife was acting on the London boards. She went by the name of Mademoiselle Sainte-Helene, and appeared to be rather a favorite with the press and public generally. Her acting, though slightly unequal and wanting in vigor, was piquante and lady-like; besides which she had a pretty face and a good voice.

I made inquiries, and learned that nobody said anything against her reputation. Mademoiselle Sainte-Helene was "eminently respectable."

Barbe Bleue had a long run. I happened to be dining with Saltram on the last night, and I asked if she had never recognised him; he looked annoyed, for we avoided the subject in general, but answered "No." Then I took courage to add what I had wished to tell him, that Mademoiselle Sainte-Helene bore a good name among those who knew her. To this he made no reply whatsoever.

After dinner, he proposed going to the theatre. I said: "The Gaiety?" at which he colored slightly, but only said: "If you like. It is the last night."

When John went by himself, he usually occupied a pit-stall rather in one corner, but to-night we had seats exactly in front, and not far from the stage—rather a conspicuous position, indeed. Helene came on, and went through her part in the usual manner, and with rather more than the usual amount of applause. She had just finished a scene in which, after alternately cajoling and bullying the marquis, she has to sing a song. She sang it very well, with great expression, and she was called for again, and encored. Then it was, as she came forward to make her courtesy, that her eyes met those of her husband.

I saw the flash of recognition pass from one to another like an electric shock; but if I had not, I should have known something had happened by the trembling of the arm of the seat on which Saltram's elbow rested. That ceased in a—But the paint hid any varying color in her face; only her eyes widened into a bewildered stare. She staggered back, and I thought she was going to faint; but the mock-marquis came to her side, and after a minute's hesitation, the curtain fell without a repetition of the song.

"Why the dickens didn't she sing?" asked a young fop near us. "Confound these people!

They give themselves such airs now, that they seem to forget they're paid to please us, not themselves."

"A niceish girl," drawled his friend. "Vewy decent ankles. Not quite bwass enough for Boulotte, though. Little Fantine had twithe the go in her."

Despite Saltram's enormous self-command, I saw him shiver all over, and a black look came over his face. Drawing nearer, I whispered to him to come home. What was the use of staying?

"I will see it out," he answered fiercely. "It is the last night, and I go abroad on Monday. I will see it out."

I said no more; and after rather a longer delay than usual, the curtain drew up. Some one near us said the heat had caused Mademoiselle Sainte-Helene to faint. The hissing fop said: "Pwetly cweature!"

I hoped that manager would come forward and apologise for her non-appearance; but no; whatever Helene might have suffered from the sudden recognition of her husband, it had passed off now, for she came on again, looking just the same as ever. I saw her eyes go out in search of John, though, and meet his cold, steady gaze with an almost defiant glance. Her figure, which was truly superb, was drawn up to its full height; and through the rest of the piece, if, as people said, she acted better than she had ever done before in her life, she as certainly acted for and at no living being but John Saltram. Every time her eyes turned in his direction, her manner seemed to acquire more force and dash, the very qualities for the absence of which her acting was generally blamed, and when the curtain fell on the final act, the house shook with the applause Boulotte had elicited.

There was an after-piece in which Helene was also to appear; and as Saltram did not stir, I concluded to wait for the finish as well. It was a sort of pastoral extravaganza, comprising two or three very pretty scenic effects, a good deal of singing, and some dancing. Another woman, *première danseuse* to the company, took the principal part, Helene having to act a sort of fairy genius. She looked very lovely when she came on, being dressed in a loosely flowing garment of some shining silvery material, which fell in simple classical folds around her, allowing the outlines of her graceful figure to show to the best advantage, and leaving her neck and arms bare, and white as polished ivory. Her long hair flowed in a cascade of jetty ripples half-way down her back; and on her head a diadem of five silver stars glittered at every movement of her small head, like a wreath of moonlight. A fair vision indeed to any stranger. To her husband—Well, I am a plain man, and I think I would rather have claimed the dowdiest little girl present as my wife, than that queenly beauty before the light, at whom the whole house clapped their hands, and beat their feet on the floor, in vociferous acclamation. Helene hardly seemed to hear them. As before, her face was turned towards her husband, and his was set in cool, contemptuous indifference.

I think, if possible, she surpassed herself in this piece. The quieter role she had to perform suited her better; and almost every time she spoke or moved, she was greeted with audible exclamations of admiration. In the final scene, a repentant Damon was clasping his easily-forgiving Chloe to his manly bosom, when, from the silver mists of evening (a capital executed effect) was seen to rise the glittering figure of the spirit queen, who, slowly ascending into air, her hands clasped above her head, sang a sort of rhyming benediction over the blissfully intertwined couple on the moonlit green beneath—over, not to. She sang to John Saltram, no one else. I don't remember the song, but two lines of its hackneyed burden have run in my head ever since:

"Truer and purer than sunlight of morning,
Ever was she whose fond love you were
scorning."

She was singing them at she rose into the blaze of stage moonlight pouring down on the scene, her lovely eyes still fixed more yearningly than in defiance on John's stern, impassive face, when of a sudden her clasped hands parted; she uttered a shrill cry of terror, turned completely over and after dangling for a moment from the cord which ought to have sustained her, fell head downwards on to the stage.

With her attention distracted by her husband's presence, she had let go the cord above her head; and so only held by the feet, had overbalanced herself.

I wonder if any man reading this happened to be at the Gaiety that night; if so, he cannot have forgotten the cry of horror and pity which rose from every corner of the crowded house, the screams of women and children, and the rush for the stage from pit and boxes. Two men reached it long before the rest—John Saltram and I. He had cried out too; but such a cry! I have never heard the like before or after.

She had fallen on a miniature fountain, made of spiral glass tubes, and had smashed it beneath her. When we leaped on the stage, she was lying on her back in a pool of blood; but the next moment the crowd surged round and over us, till all three were well-nigh suffocated in the crush. I think I swore at them to keep back: I am not sure. One is not answerable for such moments of excitement; but the manager and policeman on duty speedily cleared away the people, driving the dark rush back like an ink wave. They would have sent us off also; but I said: "I am a surgeon; and this is her husband." Then they let us stop. Saltram never spoke, not one word.

We tried to lift her; but at the first movement, she uttered a piercing cry. A second effort only produced the same effect. Yet it was impossible to do anything for her, lying there among the shattered debris of glass and pasteboard.

"Speak to her, Saltram," I said then; "she will mind you."

He was bending over her, holding her head on his arm. When I said that, he stooped his face lower over her closed eyes and whispered: "Nellie!"

I saw her lips quiver, and signed to him to go on.

"You must let me lift you on to a bed. It will be only a moment's doing. I will try not to hurt you."

He lifted her head, and I her feet, as he spoke. She shut her teeth hard, but though a moan broke through them, she uttered no cry. I had not overrated her power of self-control, or the force of early obedience to one voice: two traits generally to be found in women. We got her on to a mattress hastily laid on a table, and there I examined her injuries. Her left arm was broken; so was one of her ribs. She was badly cut in several places; but these were curable hurts, and I felt hopeful. Then I found that I had not discovered the worst. Falling as she had done, she had injured herself internally; and when I found that, I knew Helen Saltram had only an hour's life, at best, in which to make her peace with God and man.

I tried to tell Saltram, but it was not needed; he read it in my face, in the grasp of my hand; and the strong man staggered, as though some one had dealt him a heavy blow.

The pain of moving her for the necessary examination, and of binding her wounds, had caused her to faint; but ere long she opened her great, blue, amethyst eyes, and said: "Dr. Elliott." Then, after a pause: "Is John there still?"

He was standing behind her, and her head rested on his breast. I told her so. She did not seem to hear, for she was moaning heavily; but presently she said: "Lay me down. I do not want you to be pitiful to me because I am dying." Then after another long gasping breath: "You know I am dying, doctor, do you not?"

"Yes, Mrs. Saltram, I fear—I greatly fear you are."

Through all the pain she was suffering, a smile gleamed over her pale lips as she said: "Fear, doctor, when it will set your friend free?"

I could not bear to hear her, and see the mute, grim agony in the man's face above her; and I answered warmly: "For Heaven's sake, do not speak in that way, Mrs. Saltram. If you never believed in your husband's love before, trust it now; and do not die at enmity with him, whom you promised at the altar to cleave to, till death did you part."

"I am not at enmity with him," she answered faintly, but steadily. "He is with me. Ask him, and he will tell you so. He always speaks the truth. He has wronged me cruelly, but I have forgiven him. I am going to speak the truth now, and then he may forgive me if he will."

I put some cordial to her lips, and begged her not to exert herself. Even Saltram spoke, very gently, as though he were soothing a child.

"I have forgiven everything, Nellie. Rest now in peace." She only reiterated: "I will tell you before I die;" and we had to let her have her way. What she said, I give in her own words, just as they came, in short, panting gasps from her white lips.

"Dr. Elliott, I loved John—I loved him from the first moment I saw him. I left everything for him, because I loved him so much. I was fond of my father, though he was never kind or gentle to me; but I left him for John. I left the nuns who were like mothers to me, and whom I loved dearly, for him. I used to cry about it sometimes, when I was alone; but I made light of it to him, lest it should grieve him that he had grieved me. . . . We were very happy; I was, at least, for a while; Naples was so gay—ravissante, and John so good. People admired me, and I like to be admired, and hear myself called beautiful. Que voulez-vous? I had only seventeen years. I liked John to be admired too; it made me proud. He was angry if I was praised. Then I teased him, for I knew he loved me; and I was only a child. He took me to England. I hated it. I hated Yorkshire more, it was cold and bleak. I hated the people most; they were colder still. I tried to be polite; but they would not have me. Then I gave up trying; and John was vexed. He like them; they were his people. . . . I grew very unhappy. John grew cold and hard. Yet I thought he loved me, that he would love me better if we were back in bright, beautiful Paris. . . . We could not go, with my father there and disowning me. . . . John brought me to London for a week. I met there the Baron de Montigny. He was to have married me—you recollect? He was very kind and gentle now, and promised to reconcile my father to me. I did not tell John. He had grown so jealous, I was afraid to speak of a man to him; and he hated the baron. . . . After I went to Yorkshire, De Montigny wrote to me. He sent the letters through my maid. They were all about my father, and how he progressed in his intercession—nothing else. As I had not told John at first, I dare not now. I loved him dearly, but I was afraid of him, and I meant to tell him all when my father had yielded; and beg him to come back to Paris for a while, and let us be happy again. . . . One day, John found out about the letters. My maid told him, and gave him a letter of mine to the baron. John put it in the fire. He was too honorable to read it, or he would have known

all; but he came to me, and standing in my room, told me quite coolly—me, a lady, a girl of nineteen, his own wife! that I was intriguing against him; that I was a bad woman, an unfaithful wife..... When he said that to me, I knew his love was gone. I was passionate; and he had wronged and insulted me. I could not stay with him, you see, Dr. Elliott, after that; and I said I would go to my father..... De Montigny had written to me the day before to tell me my father wished to see and forgive me. The baron was in Yorkshire; and he begged me to meet him next day in the Park..... I saw him there, and told him I would go to my father at once. Then he said he would take me; and he did. When we got to Paris, he told me my father had gone to Brittany on business, and we must follow him. I agreed; and he took me to a chateau near the sea-coast.—Dr. Elliott, he had deceived me! My father had never written, never heard from him. It was all a lie. He thought to make me love him by such means as these—I left him on the instant, and went to a little inn. I was ill there of a fever; and when I got well—it was many weeks—I wrote to my father. I got no answer. I wrote again. Then he sent me word that I had disgraced him doubly, and was no child of his. Thrice wronged, you see doctor! What could I do? And I was little more than a child. I tried to teach; but no one would take me without a reference—me, a penniless girl in shabby finery. Then I got an engagement in a country theatre. I was always fond of acting. I have been an actress ever since; and while I have earned my bread, no living being has whispered a word against me. Ask, and you will hear it is true. You can see the baron's letters too; they are all at my lodgings; and the address of the inn at Brittany. That is all I had to say, except—

Her breathing came in short, irregular sobs. There was a cold moisture on her brow, a mist of tears in her eyes.

"John," she said, turning her face so as to look into his—her lips were parted in the same yearning appeal I had seen in the fairy queen's glowing face—"won't you forgive me, now I am dying, and have taken the cloud off your life? We were both to blame; but I love you. O John, I always loved you!"

The last words were said with her lips glued to his, with his arms round her body, with his scalding tears, the first I had ever seen John Saltram shed, wetting her white face.

I went and sat down on a bale of matting in the corner, and cried covertly. I suppose it was very unmanly, and unprofessional, but I can't help that. Outside, the cabs and omnibuses rolled on in a ceaseless dull roar, and the rain pattered down like millions of tiny feet on the muddy London stones.

She died a little after one o'clock that morning. John sent some one for a priest (she was a Catholic, you remember), and one came, and gave her the sacrament. I don't know what he said to her, of course; but when it was all over he told me she wanted to speak to me. She was lying in John's arms then, with a smile on her lips; and she just moved her cold fingers for me to take them in mine, as she said:

"Dr. Elliott, I told you that John had wronged me, and I forgave him. I know now it was I who wronged him by leaving him. I made his life desolate, and his heart hard, by letting him believe me false to him. You were always his friend, that is why I tell you. I have been a bad wife, and he loved me more than I deserved. Take care of him, and love him for me when I am gone."

John tried to interrupt her, to take the blame on his own shoulders. I could see his heart was broken, and so did she. One of his hands was lying on her breast, and she drooped her face and kissed it. That was the last effort. I think she died a minute or two afterwards.

John Saltram is living still. I don't know whether I take care of him, or he of me; a little of both I fancy. He has sold his estate in Yorkshire, and we two old men live together in London, where I still practise occasionally. You may give up your rich patients; but if the poor won't give you up, what are you to do? Five or six times in the year, Saltram leaves me for a day, I never ask where he has been, nor does he allude to it; but I know the quiet churchyard, ten miles from London, where Nelly Saltram's body lies buried with John's broken heart; and I know that if I live the longest, I shall one day stand beside the grave, and see another coffin laid upon that which holds the thoughtless young wife whom Saltram understood so little, and lost so early!

DELMAS.

AN EVENTFUL REMINISCENCE OF AN EVENTFUL TIME.

BY HECTOR A. STUART.

Old San Franciscans will remember a small zinc house which stood on the Mission road about two furlongs beyond the cemetery of Yerba Buena. It was a lonely place—in those times remote from the city, rarely pressed by the foot of traveller; while the jay screamed in the woods unmolested and the coyote howled within a stone's throw of the dwelling. This lonely house was tenanted by an English sailor,

his wife, and a son—the latter a child in years. These three people had lived there since it was first placed on its site, and that was in 1849, a year before the opening of this narrative. What had induced the sailor to choose this lonely place for a habitation was known but to himself, though it was supposed that a design of appropriating the lands in the neighborhood was one of the principal reasons; but if it were, he was never to carry out the intention. This man, as we have said, was an English sailor well advanced in years, and a washerman by occupation. He and his wife took in washing for a living, and, though some may sneer at a man following such a vocation, yet he not unfrequently made \$15 a day—washing then averaging from six to ten dollars a dozen. Le Mete, such was his name, had one habit which was the bane of his best intentions—he was a slave to the bottle. To this, being a seafaring man, he had long been addicted; as he grew older, it continued to grow upon him; all his attempts to reform were unavailing, and at last he became a thorough drunkard, a plague to himself and a curse to his family. He was not naturally an evil man; but it makes little difference whether evil be indigenous or exotic to those who suffer from its consequences. A saint who spreads sin unwittingly is as deserving reprobation as a sinner who spreads it wilfully. Le Mete was not an evil man, yet he led his wife a sorry round. She, poor woman, returned kindness for cruelty; she was ever faithful, ever his counsellor; and when he at last died—died by violence—they were earnest tears that fell from her eyes upon his grave. For some time before his death he had been accustomed to frequent a drinking place on the road, where a number of strange characters met together to converse, smoke, sing songs, and tell stories. Where these worthies came from was not easy to tell; their original haunts were as little known as their occupations. The greater part, however, professed to be wood-cutters.

Such were the men among whom Le Mete passed the greater portion of his time. He chanced to make the acquaintance of a man named Jackson, who assumed to be the leader of this crew; and as this man was dogmatic and Le Mete disputative, they were continually involved in discussions, which, it may be observed, frequently terminated in an appeal to force, the disputants maintaining by strength of arms what they had declared by word of mouth. This man Jackson was a loose character; he called himself a wood-cutter, but his manner was above his condition; his education was fair, and at times he disclosed a mind well stored with information. But his countenance was repulsive; and if there was any truth in Lavater, he had all the traits that characterize a villain. This man and Le Mete were inseparable companions. It is true they were prone to debate, and at times used their cudgels for something more than ornament; but as they usually closed the battle with a "friendly horn" they were as firm friends as ever. One night they had a dispute on "solar heat," for like most men desirous of showing their knowledge, they generally chose such subjects as they knew the least about; and "solar heat" being a subject of which they were unusually ignorant, was often brought forward in discussion. A theme of this sort would naturally engender warmth, and it was not long before the two disputants, finding they were cramped in logic, fell to blows in the vain hope that physical force might annihilate where intellectual acumen had failed to dislodge. In the middle of the contest Jackson, as if determined to make a lasting impression on his opponent, struck him over the temple with a bottle. He produced an effect, but it was faral. Le Mete fell and with a groan expired. Horrified at the deed he had committed, Jackson fled, and though a vigorous search was made for him all that night and the day following, he was nowhere to be found. Meanwhile the body of Le Mete had passed the usual, and at that time hasty, ceremony preceding the last rites. The Coroner, Edward Gallagher, had held an inquest, which gave a verdict in accordance with the circumstances; the undertaker had performed his duties, and nothing remained to be done save the closing task of burial. It was night. One of those cold, impenetrable fogs not unusual in the summer months had descended on the peninsula, wrapping the city in gloom, and veiling the nearest objects in a shroud of uncertainty. The wind, too, had risen, and murmured through the trees with a melancholy sound.

On this night two women sat in a dimly lighted room in the little zinc habitation. They were pale, anxious, and careworn-looking women; if they conversed it was in subdued tones, and they frequently glanced nervously and anxiously at a dark wooden box placed upon a pair of trestles. In this box lay the remains of Le Mete, waiting the approaching of day to be laid under the sands of Yerba Buena. Until then they were watched by his widow and her sister-in-law, the two women who kept their lonely vigils in this lonely hut on that lonely night. It is a solemn task at any time to "watch the dead." But under these mournful circumstances the task was increased in sadness—the moaning of the wind, the loneliness of the hour, even the flickering shadows cast by the two lights burning at the head of the coffin, conspired to augment the natural melancholy of the occasion. The hearts of the two watchers often shook with nameless terror, and at every sough of the wind they gazed round furtively, as if they expected to discover some terrible apparition. But they saw nothing, save the weird shadows on the walls. In the middle of the night, however, a knock was heard at the door;

the door was of zinc, gave back the sound strangely, and the two women started on their feet in horror. The knock, after a short pause, was repeated. The widow, summoning her courage, hastened to the door and asked who desired admittance. A weak voice requested lodging for the night.

"We let no lodgings, friend," said she. "You must inquire elsewhere."

The voice answered:

"I am an old man broken down with travel and faint with hunger. Give me something to eat, and I will find a shelter under the trees."

The widow, fearful the plea might be intended as a means for some villain to obtain an entrance, was about to refuse, when the sister-in-law interposed. She desired the stranger might be admitted, and to account for her wish told the widow that she had a presentiment that he was come for their good. She could give no reason for this feeling, only it was strong upon her, and, though far from superstitious, she believed it an intimation from the invisible.

"Come," said she, "let us give admittance to the stranger, and if evil comes upon us for so doing, let me bear the blame of it."

The words struck the widow with surprise, but not knowing what reply to make she was silent; and the sister-in-law, taking this for consent, unlocked the door and bade the stranger enter. His appearance was not calculated to excite alarm, neither was it disposed to prepossess in his favor. He was a tall, spare man, beyond the prime of life; his hair long, thin and white; his countenance weather-beaten, ordinary, but of a singularly resolute expression. Though old, his figure had much of its early vigor; his bearing was erect and soldier-like. He appeared, however to disadvantage in his costume, which was not alone coarse and travel-stained, but worn to shreds; his hat had no crown and his toes peeped through his shoes. On his back he bore a bundle of gray blankets, thickly covered with dust—supporting his unsteady steps with a stick which he carried in his hand. Such an apparition was not likely to create respect; yet his entertainers gazed on him more in pity than in perplexity, for, with the intuitive perception of their sex, they saw in him more of a friend than an enemy. He sat down, relieved himself of his burden, and begged a drink of water. This was given, and with it a supply of more solid refreshment, which having eaten, he began in a plain manner to give them an insight into his history, particularly that part which was the cause of his present pitiable condition. We have not space to recapitulate all he said, though he had led a checkered life. He was a native of Indiana, but removing West at an early age, had followed the occupation of a hunter. Thence he removed to Texas, where he fought under Sam Houston. He was in the war with Mexico, and was among the stormers of Chapultepec. Marrying a woman of Puebla, he settled in the republic, but his wife dying, came to California about the outbreak of the gold fever. Here he met with the usual variations of fortune which followed a gold-seeker, but on the whole fared above the ordinary; till falling sick he was reduced to indigence. When his health was restored he set out from the southern mines on foot to San Francisco. This long and tedious journey he accomplished, but on reaching the Mission was so faint, having eaten but a little bread for several days, and so footsore that he thought he could not go a step further. But after a rest under a willow near the roadside he was so refreshed as to venture to push on, though he would have laid down an hour longer had not the approach of night forced him to seek a less exposed shelter. He was so weak, however, that it was hard upon midnight before he came within eyeshot of the widow's house, where, seeing a light, he resolved to beg a lodging for the night for he found it impossible to continue his journey. The two women were sensibly touched at this recital, and gave Delmas—such was the old soldier's name—a generous welcome to their abode. He in turn sympathized with the widow in her affliction, and offered to join with the two watchers in their vigils over the dead. This they gently declined, saying he was in need of rest, and they had already prepared a couch for him to pass the night. As he persisted, however, they were at length prevailed to let him act as he desired, whereupon he asked if they had any arms in the house.

"My husband," answered the widow, "was accustomed to keep a supply, but since he fell into bad habits he sold or pawned them all."

"Not all, dear," said the sister-in-law, "I think there is a gun in a corner of your bedroom, under the clothes-rack. If you like I will go and see."

The widow gave a murmur of assent.

"It is well," said the old soldier, "to be prepared for emergencies, and in an out-of-the-way place like this one cannot be too guarded."

He was yet speaking when the sister-in-law's voice was heard from the adjoining room.

"Here it is," she said, "but I am afraid to touch it. Come and get it, Mr. Delmas."

The soldier smiled, entered the room, and returned with a double-barrelled fowling-piece, which he examined with attention. It was an old English gun, and had evidently not been used for a long time. He sprang the ramrod and found both barrels charged. He asked if there was any ammunition. The women doubted. But the widow, going to a chest used by Le Mete to keep odds-and-ends in, returned with a powder-horn and a blacking-box full of bullets. No caps could be found, but the two on the piece were still serviceable. The soldier's eye brightened, and he seemed more composed than before. He carefully drew the two charges,

and with systematic alertness proceeded to load the gun afresh. He had just fixed the caps on the nipples when a low whistle rose upon the wind, trembled for a moment, and died away in the distance. The women started and looked round in terror; the soldier, too, could not repress a shudder. He bade them listen. In about a minute a sound of footsteps was heard approaching; and Delmas, telling the women to retire into the kitchen, took his post, gun in hand, at the door. He had scarce stationed himself when a heavy blow was directed on the lock; it burst from its fastenings; the door fell, and three men entered. At the same moment Delmas fired; the foremost ruffian dropped upon the threshold, and his two comrades hastily retreated. They soon paused, however, and replied with a volley from their pistols, but without effect. Delmas then rushed on them and gave them the contents of his remaining barrel, which wounded both, but one so slightly he made his escape. His comrade ran a little distance, but soon sank down severely wounded, and groaning in a deplorable manner. The soldier called for a light, and examined that wounded man. The two women were beside him during this proceeding; as he held the lantern over the countenance of the one he had first shot, they recognized Jackson, the murderer of Le Mete! They were greatly astonished, as may be supposed, at this discovery; and so, too, was the soldier, when he heard the story. He found then that the man Jackson was a double-dyed villain. Not content with having killed the husband, he must raise his hand against the widow, and under cover of night assail her house, no doubt for the purpose of plunder. He had not words sufficient to express his hatred of the wretch, nor would he waste his time in endeavoring to alleviate his misery; so he dragged him to an outhouse, and there left him to perish or recover, as Providence might determine. In the same manner he treated the other rogue, whom he discovered to be a Chileno, with this exception, that he bound up his wounds which were in the shoulder, having done which he locked the two rogues up. The night had now worn away and the gray streak that heralded the dawn was seen breaking in the East. It was a cold, foggy morning, with a high wind; but the veteran paid little heed to the weather, as, enveloped in Le Mete's watch-coat, he took his station on the Mission road, waiting to hail the first town-bound traveller who should chance along. After an hour's impatient watching, a market wagon from San Souci approached, and the driver, an Italian, being hailed by the soldier, drew up to learn the cause of his stoppage. Delmas told him in a few words what had occurred, and begged him to inform the authorities so they might take action in the matter. The Italian promised, and discharged his obligation in a faithful manner. Reaching the city, he notified Marshal Fallon, who immediately took the necessary measures to secure the scoundrels. They were found in the outhouse, almost dead from loss of blood; however, on being taken to the hospital they rallied, and the Chileno ultimately recovered, though a cripple for life. Jackson, however, died, and cheated the gallows. He was stubborn to the last, and all attempts to bring him to a confession were thrown away. Three days after the remains of Le Mete had been conveyed to Yerba Buena the ashes of his murderer found a cell in the same resting-place. Two were thus disposed of; and, with due respect to the dead, we question whether the world was not better for their taking off. The Chileno, when his wounds were cured stood a trial for house-breaking with the design of taking life, and was convicted. He, however, escaped and to this day is outside the walls of San Quentin. While he was yet lying in the hospital, he explained the cause of the attack on the widow's dwelling, which was in the main as the soldier had supposed. Jackson was the instigator of the project. He believed Le Mete had saved considerable money, that it was hoarded in his house—the sailor preferring, like many others in those uncertain times, to be his own banker. This idea ran in Jackson's mind, and he was ever devising some means by which he could come at the money without too great hazard; but could resolve on none till the death of Le Mete removed the bar to his resolution. After slaying his victim, he fled for safety to a woodcutter's hut, built in the middle of a swamp, the site of which is now occupied by the French Hospital. In this hut Jackson found shelter, and being a familiar acquaintance with its occupants—two Chilenos—proposed they should join together and break into the widow's dwelling, assuring them they would get a good booty to award their adventure. It did not require much persuasion to induce the two woodcutters to fall in with this scheme; they were men of evil character, and had been driven from Senora for being concerned in a plot to fire the town and massacre the whites, but which was discovered in season to render it unsuccessful. We say it did not take much persuasion to induce these dusky rogues to join with Jackson in his scheme of plunder, so having agreed they lost no time in pushing forward their enterprise, resolving to attack the house the following night.

Here we leave them. How the scheme failed has been narrated. It was well for the widow the hand of Providence directed Delmas to her lonely habitation on that night. Had it been otherwise, neither she nor her son nor her sister-in-law might have lived to tell who hurt them.

Of Delmas after this exploit we know little. At the time his valor was greatly lauded, but in the excitement of the hour the boldest deed was easily forgotten. Delmas could not survive the inevitable chaos.

THE LAST OF THE IDYLLS.

"ENDED at last
Those wondrous dreams, so beautifully told!
It seems that I have through enchantment
passed,
And lived and loved in that fair court of old.

"Yes, yes, I know—
The old Greek idylls about which you rave,
Theocritus and his melodious flow
verse, and all that Moschus sang o'er Bion's
grave.

"You've shown me oft
How far superior all that they have said—
That Tennyson has learned to soar aloft
By seeking inspiration from the greater dead.

"And yet in me
A pulse is never stirred by what they sing:
The reason I know not, unless it be
Their idylls are not Idylls of the King.

"You smile: no doubt
You think I've never learned to criticise.
Perhaps so, yet I feel that which I peak
about.
And Enim is the last! Well, no more sighs;

"For spring is here:
I have no time to waste in dreamings vain.
After our marriage—nay, you need not
sneer—
We will read all the idylls through again.

"So shall it be
So long as lives the love which poets sing.
The harp is still, yet is begun for thee
A lifelong dream—the idyll of thy king."

THE DOVE-COLORED SILK.

By a kind of thoughtful arrangement on the part of their employers, every domestic in the house of Sir John Dayton, baronet and banker, received his or her salary one week before Christmas Day.

Very bright and tempting looked the tiny pile of sovereigns that Lottie Warde, Miss Dayton's own maid, carried away to her chamber, and sat meditating over, with a cloud on her pretty face such as it seldom wore. Last Christmas the spending of her money had cost her no trouble, except a quickly stifled regret that she could not do more with it for those dear ones, whose kisses and joyful thanks had been such pleasant requital of her generosity.

Although she was as dutiful and loving a daughter and as kind a sister as of yore, there had been an event in Lottie's life since the year began that was closely connected with the impatient sigh she gave, as she sat gazing at her gold, and abstractedly turning it over and over in her palm. She had met, at the house of an old friend of her late father, a young man so well connected that many wondered he should think of wedding a girl who was "in service." Mr. Charles Morison, they argued, with his good prospects and excellent situation in the office of Smithson Brothers, ought to look higher for a wife than Lottie Warde, whose father had died bankrupt, and whose mother's sole dependence was the annuity some of Mr. Warde's compassionate creditors had purchased for her. But if Charlie Morison heard these things hinted, he laughed and forgot them. He loved Lottie for herself—her sweet temper, her good principles, and the pretty face and figure, that were always set off by the perfect neatness and propriety with which she dressed.

Lottie, however, had taken to heart many of the remarks made in her presence or told by ill-natured friends, and had rather hastily decided in her own mind that the relatives of her affianced husband looked down upon her because of her position. This fancy—for it was no more—had made her shy of meeting them, and unwilling to accept the invitations so kindly sent to her. But Charlie had made a point of her acceding to his parents' wish that she should join the family party they always gathered round them at their handsome house at Clapham on the eve of the great festival; and as Miss Dayton had cheerfully consented to spare her, she had not been able to excuse herself.

Naturally timid and shrinking from strangers, Lottie looked forward to this visit as an ordeal rather than a pleasure. She was to be introduced to Charlie's married sister from Manchester and to the wealthy uncle from whom he had expectations; and her anxiety that they should think well of her culminated in the inquiry, "What shall I wear?"

It was no use discussing this question with her betrothed. She knew he would say that nothing could be in better taste than the well-fitting dark merino that had been her best dress since the commencement of the autumn. But Lottie had her share of girlish vanity, and as she raised her eyes to her looking-glass a vision rose before her of a certain dove-colored silk in a mercer's window near St. Paul's that would become her admirably. It was true that such an expensive purchase would absorb every farthing in her possession, but she chose to ignore this. So strong grew the temptation that when Lottie went that evening to

visit her mother she lingered long at the mercer's window, and decided that on the morrow the dove-colored silk should be her own.

The children threw down their books and toys when Lottie entered, for they loved her dearly, and Mrs. Warde, though she had been wearing a very anxious face, as she stitched busily at some childish garment, contrived to smile at her eldest daughter, who, however, was not easily deceived.

"Something has gone wrong, mother; I am sure of it by your looks. What is it?"

"Nothing you can alter, dear; nothing in fact, that I ought to dwell upon. I heard, by chance, that the man through whose roguery your father failed has returned to England, and is in prosperous circumstances; and it worried me for a little while to think that my excellent upright husband went to his grave in sorrow and poverty, while this dishonest man holds up his head and grows rich; but it was only for a minute, child; and Mrs. Warde smiled now with less effort. "I know to whom I have committed my cause, and I will not murmur at anything He wills."

Lottie kissed the placid speaker affectionately, but she was not as sympathetic as usual. Her little sisters hung about her, wondering whether they should have a Christmas pudding, and one of them blurted out a fact hitherto concealed; that mother did not go to church on Sundays till evening service because her shawl was so shabby. Lottie slid her hand into the pocket where lay her little purse, but drew it back again, telling herself that she could not possibly go to visit Charlie's friends meanly dressed; and when the youngest child climbed on her knee and frankly asked what she was going to bring him for a Christmas present, he was set down again and so sharply told not to tease that Mrs. Warde's mild eyes were raised in surprise.

"I beg pardon, mother," said her daughter, coloring under the reproof the look conveyed. "I am afraid I am rather stupid this evening. What were you saying about Robert?—he is elected pupil teacher at his school. Of course he is—I knew he would be! he has worked so hard for it, dear, good boy!" and she ran across the room to kiss the studious lad, who warmly returned her caresses.

"Then you're glad of it, Lottie? So am I, only I think mother's bothered a bit about the books I shall want."

"Will they cost much?" asked his sister. "Well, dear, it seems much to persons of our limited income," Mrs. Warde replied. "And he must have a new suit of clothes. But I hope to manage it without running into debt, if you can help me a little."

Lottie did not speak, and her mother thoughtfully added, "The girls will have to do without the new hats I promised them; and baby's pelisse must last another winter; and—"

But here her daughter stopped her by pettishly saying, "Oh, mother! pray don't tell us of any more wants; they seem endless. How miserable it is to be so poor; how sick of contrivances and makeshifts you must be. I know I am. And somehow the children always seem to need most when one has least to spare."

"I did not know you were in that predicament, dear, or I would not have spoken so plainly," Mrs. Warde replied; "but don't let it worry you," she added, with the cheerful air that covered a multitude of anxious thoughts; "we shall manage very well, I dare say."

Lottie went away with her money still in her pocket, but with a load at her heart—half shame, half selfish ill-humor,—which was not lessened by standing at the mercer's window for another half-hour before she went back to Sir John's. While her gaze was fixed on the silk, her rebellious spirit was murmuring at the difficulties of her position. It was so hard that she should always be hampered with the home-cares. Other young people could spend their salaries on themselves, while her purse had such constant calls upon it that there was nothing left for herself. And mother was not thoughtful for her; she never seemed to remember that a girl of her age would naturally wish to be smart, especially when she visited persons in better circumstances than herself.

Miss Dayton wanted some trifle brought from her own room that evening, and Lottie had executed her commission and was retreating, when the voice of Sir John, who was reading the evening paper, arrested her. "Dear me! how sad these cases are, one never knows who to trust. Listen to this, Letitia: 'The confidential clerk of Smithson Brothers absconded last night. His employers had had their suspicions aroused by some circumstance or other, and hinted an intention of looking into his accounts. As soon as he learned this he made business in the country a pretence for his flight, and it is supposed that he is on his way to America.'"

To Lottie's strained ears every word of this was horribly audible, and the next minute she was running down stairs, putting on her hat and shawl as she went.

"If I am asked for," she gasped to the wond'ring housekeeper, "say that I am ill—that I have gone to my mother's; but don't stop me—don't question me, or I shall die."

But it was to the home of Austin Crawley, a fellow-clerk of Charlie's, she first took her way. She would not give up all hope till she had seen him, and heard his lips confirm the dreadful tale; and as she went along she tried to comfort herself in repeating, "It cannot be! Charlie Morison a defaulter, a fugitive from justice—it is impossible!"

Mrs. Crawley herself answered Lottie's knock and her smiling, cheerful face made the girl feel her own misery grow sharper.

"No, Austin had not returned from the city yet," she said. "Would not Lottie come in and wait for him? She was quite alone, for Mr. Crawley had been at Smithson's all day, taking the place (she believed) of Charlie Morison, whose absence seemed to have put the firm very much out of their way. There was nothing amiss, was there?" she added, as she took a closer survey of her visitor's face.

But her question remained unanswered, for Lottie was already hurrying away. The last faint hope that the report was a dreadful mistake had perished before Mrs. Crawley's placid utterances. Austin, the gay and careless, whose spendthrift habits had often displeased his parents, had preserved his integrity; while Charlie Morison, the son of many prayers, the steady, intellectual young man, who indulged in no low tastes, no "loud" attired, had forfeited his high character and disgraced his family—this was her conclusion.

Away through the busiest streets of London, hurrying on with her face muffled in her veil, lest any one should perceive the anguish depicted on it, she walked, till she found herself before the well-known offices of Messrs. Smithson. They had been closed hours earlier; but the old man who was porter and care-taker was standing at the door, talking to some curious acquaintances.

Unperceived by the garrulous speaker, Lottie paused long enough to hear her lover's name coupled with words indistinctly caught relating to the large sums of money that were missing.

"His father was here this morning, as soon as the news was made public," the porter went on—"such a respectable old gentleman." But here his voice was lowered, and Lottie passed by, hearing only something about the young man's broken-hearted mother as she went; but it reminded her that she was not alone in her grief: that the loving parents, who had cherished their son in his childhood, and seen him gradually expand into the bright, intelligent man, must be well-nigh crushed beneath the blow that had so suddenly fallen upon them. Oh! what was her grief to theirs?

And now Lottie flew to her own haven, the arms of her mother, and there wept the first tears her burning eyes had shed.

Shocked, and for some time incredulous, Mrs. Warde, with infinite patience and tenderness, sustained her child during those hours in which her anguish was almost more than she could bear.

Never again would Lottie accuse this dear friend and comforter of being wanting in sympathy. Who else would have borne so kindly with her wild bursts of impatient sorrow—her restless paces to and fro—her passionate complaints? Who else would so skilfully have taken advantage of her better feelings to bring her to her knees, and teach her to bow her head to the Divine will?

"How good you are to me, darling mother!" she sobbed, when Mrs. Warde had prevailed upon her to lie down, and was bathing her aching head; "and indeed I don't deserve it. I have been so selfish, so ungrateful, that if you knew all my hard and bitter thoughts you would surely cease to love me at all!"

Mrs. Warde's only reply was to stoop and kiss her; and that kiss uprooted the last fibre of selfishness in her child's heart. Never again did Lottie let vanity stand in the place of duty; and in the midst of her trouble she could be humbly thankful that this dear mother was still all her own.

All that night she wept and bewailed herself, but when morning dawned and she saw how weary and exhausted Mrs. Warde was looking, Lottie put her good intentions in practice and restrained her grief.

While her mother rested, she moved quietly about, dressing the little ones, whom her altered looks and swollen eyes awed into unwonted soberness; nor was it till every task had been accomplished that could spare Mrs. Warde fatigue that she seated herself at her mother's feet and wept herself into the sleep of exhaustion.

But stronger arms were sustaining her when, with a start, she awoke. It was not the mild face of her mother that bent over her and smiled at her, it was Charlie Morison himself, and for a moment she believed herself to be in a happy dream.

"Can it be you?" she asked wistfully. "Speak to me, for I know not what to think, nor what to believe."

"You may believe that Charles Morison has committed no act that disgraces him," said her rejoicing mother, who stood by. "Need we tell you more?"

Lottie pressed her hands to her head, and looked from one to the other, till the tender smile on Charlie's lips confirmed the tidings.

"I seem too much bewildered to be as glad as I should be," she exclaimed. "Am I really awake?—has there been no robbery after all? That dreadful newspaper!—why did I believe the paragraph I heard Sir John read from it?"

"Sit down here, you poor, pale child," said Charlie, "and let me help you out of your mystification. I think it began the night before last, when I sought you at Sir John's to say good-by before I went on a hurried journey, and to tell you the twofold object of it."

"I had heard, dear, that the man who was the cause of all your father's misfortunes was at Birmingham; and Messrs. Smithson freely gave me permission to go there, and see whether my remonstrances, and, if those failed my threats to expose his nefarious proceedings, would induce him to do justice to your father's widow and orphans."

"And you succeeded?"

"Beyond my expectations. I have just had the pleasure of putting into your mother's hands a sum that will enable her to educate her children with comfort."

Lottie was obliged to interrupt him that she might throw her arms around Mrs. Warde's neck, and congratulate her rapturously. Then Charlie himself had to be thanked in loving, tearful whispers; and then so many pleasant little plans were discussed for the widow's future that some time elapsed before they recurred to the explanation.

"When I had completed my own business, Messrs. Smithson desired me to go to Sheffield and make some inquiries there for them. The drift of these I scarcely understood when I started, but I soon discovered that they had reference to certain suspicions they were entertaining."

"But not of you, Charlie?"

"No, love; they have never had any reason to doubt my integrity, and they have just proved their confidence in it, by promising me an increase of salary. But another of their clerks, led into temptation by a love of gayety—"

"I see it all now," sighed Lottie. "Poor Austin!"

Charlie resumed: "My father, for whom, as an old friend, Messrs. Smithson sent, to assist them in breaking the news to his parents, can scarcely bear to speak of the scenes he witnessed. Mrs. Crawley is very ill. The truth was concealed from her as long as possible. It was not until late last night she learnt that it was to bear the tale of her son's guilt that Mr. Crawley was summoned to the City; and it appears that no one had suspected how, while Austin was believed to be quietly sleeping, he had packed a portmanteau and stolen out of the house in the dead of night, to embark for America."

And so Lottie's joy in her betrothed's innocence was tempered by the knowledge that if his parents had been happily spared such deep sorrow, others were enduring it.

She spent her Christmas Eve at Clapham, but not in the dove-colored silk. She was clad soberly in the dark merino, and heard with drooping head and a troubled conscience, Mrs. Morison tell her how fully she and her husband approved their son's choice, and how her conduct as a daughter and sister had won their esteem long since.

"I am not half as good as you think me!" Lottie tearfully confessed, and deepened their interest in her by her honesty.

After all, it was Mrs. Warde who wore the dove-colored silk at her daughter's wedding. It was made up for her by Lottie herself, who, as her needle passed in and out of her work, drew from the events connected with her purchase the lesson every wise or foolish deed conveys to the heart that is opened to receive it.

MARBLED PAPER.

This, much used by bookbinders, is produced in a very curious way. The name is not exactly suitable, seeing that few of the specimens are imitations of real marble; but it has gradually become applied to sheets of paper of which one surface is made to imitate any kind of stone or wood. Small brown spots on a light ground, marble veining on a shaded ground, curled patterns and wavy patterns, all are produced in great diversity. The colors are of the usual kind, such as Naples yellow, yellow ochre, yellow lake, orpiment, verdigris, rose pink, red lead, carmine, terra di Sienna, Dutch pink, indigo, Prussian blue, verditer, amber, ivory black, etc.; they are ground up very fine with prepared wax and water and a few drops of alcohol. A solution of gum is made of gum tragacanth, alum, gall, and water, and placed in a trough or shallow flat-vessel. Color is thrown on the surface of this gum water, usually by striking a brush against a stick, so as to produce a shower of sprinkles. Pigments of different tints and different thicknesses or degrees of consistency are thrown on; some spread more than others, and thus a diversity of patterns is produced. Sometimes the color is thrown on by means of a pencil of very long bristles; it is diversified by means of a rod, held upright and carried along amongst the colors in a wavy or spiral course; and it is further cut up into tortuous lines by passing a kind of comb along it. All this takes place on the surface of the gum solution in the vat. When the vat is prepared a sheet of paper is laid down flat on the solution, care being taken that very part of the surface shall be wetted; the paper takes up a layer of paint, fancifully disposed in a pattern or device, and is hung up to dry. In order that one color may not be blended or confused with another, they are ground up with different liquids, some watery, some gummy, some oily. The imitations of marble, gray and red granite, and fancy woods, are certainly not very faithful; but the paper is lively in appearance, and remains clean and bright a long time when polished. This polishing is effected by moistening the colored surface of the paper with a little soap, and rubbing it with a piece of smooth marble, an ivory knob, a glass ball, or an agate burnisher. Beautiful products have been produced within the last few years under the names of iridescent and opalescent paper. Like the commoner kinds, these receive colored devices on one surface; but great to produce the exquisite play of light and shade which suggests the names given to these varieties.

The Ladies' Page.

FASHION HINTS.

Some ladies are wearing daggers of silver or jet in their bonnets, sewed on a small black velvet or ribbon bow on the side.

Reversible Elisabethan ruffs are the latest. They are worn with any costume, and are lined with light-colored silk.

Work-baskets and bird-cages combined are new. They are made of willow, the cage hanging from an arch above the basket.

The old fashion of wearing beads has been revived. Jet beads are used instead of the large rubber ones as heretofore. Four times around the neck is, we believe, the correct thing just now.

Brown corduroy jackets, made double-breasted, with deep collar and revers, will be fashionable next winter. They have no trimmings save a double row of large bronze buttons.

Velvet walking costumes imported this fall are very elegant. They are made something in the redingote style, and the trimming is usually feathers and rich lace.

Artificial flowers are now used to decorate ball rooms, parlors, and halls, on festive occasions. They are cheaper than natural exotics, look quite as well, and will serve on more occasions than one.

Wax flowers are now called into requisition to trim the new winter bonnets. The large red roses worn are all of wax.

A new style of collar, said to be intended for gentlemen, is the nearest approach we have seen to the kind worn by "end-men" in minstrel companies.

Purple will be one of the most fashionable colors for out-door costumes next winter, both in silk and velvet. A silk costume of purple, with velvet revers, cuffs, and underskirt of the same color, is very elegant and stylish.

A new style of paper for dining-rooms has medallions of game and birds, real skin and feathers been used. The figures are raised on light background, which is very effective. Flowers are also introduced of wax and linen tied together with bright-colored ribbon.

Ear-rings made of English sovereigns are one of the latest novelties in jewelry. They hang from the ear from a fine gold chain fastened to the hook, and are quite pretty. Neck-laces of sovereigns are also introduced, also bracelets of the same, the coins being sewed on a wide band of black velvet.

The newest ear-rings are of bone. They are cut in the form of many-pointed stars tipped with different colors. A small star fastens in the lobe of the ear, and a larger one hangs underneath. They are very odd and very pretty. The first made were exhibited at the Vienna exposition.

TRUE TASTE MORE EFFECTIVE THAN MONEY.

Many imagine they must relinquish all hope of gratifying their tastes, or the inherent love of the beautiful, if they do not rank among the rich. This is an entirely false idea. There are houses upon which thousands of dollars have been expended that would be quite intolerable to people of real refinement as a permanent residence. The whole arrangement and furniture are so stiff and formal—so heavy and oppressive with superfluous ornament, that simple curiosity to see what strange vagaries can enter into the heads of the rich, and in what absurd manner they study to spend their abundant wealth, would seem to be the only motive which could tempt a sensible person to enter.

On the other hand we find small, modest cottages which bear unmistakable evidences of necessity for close economy, that have more of real comfort and convenience about them than those splendid mansions; and at the same time they are gems bearing in every part the stamp of true elegance and refinement. They are so beautified by the genuine taste and ingenuity of the occupants that it is a real pleasure to pass from one room to another, or sit quietly and enjoy the sweet enchantment—yet money had little to do towards securing such attractions. It is the fitness of things—the harmonious blending of shape and color, the adaptation of the furniture to the wants of each apartment, that make the whole combination so peculiarly delightful. And yet, how and from what was all this tasteful furnishing constructed?

If some of those persons whose dark and gloomy parlors are hung with the costly damask, and their furniture carved and upholstered by the most skilful and fashionable workmen, should by chance find themselves in one of these pleasant homes, they could not help being captivated by the spirit of the place, in the absence of style and fashion. The elegant, airy, graceful parlors, the rest, the peace and comfort which pervade the whole atmosphere, would be to them a new experience, and what would be their astonishment to learn with how little expense all this, which they acknowledge to be so refreshing, has been secured.

No matter if the purse is not very heavy, young people, with good health and a fair share of taste and ingenuity, have great pleasure in store for themselves when they undertake to furnish and beautify a house, which is to be their first

joint home. There are so many small conveniences, so many little contrivances that a carpenter never thinks of, because he has never had a woman's work to do, and therefore cannot see how important these little things are. A woman knows just where an hour's work, well-considered and planned, can be employed to manufacture some convenient thing that will save much time and strength, and which, however cheaply and roughly made, she can in a few spare moments transform into an object of real beauty.—*Mrs. H. W. Beecher.*

FASHIONS FOR WINTER.

Le Follet says each season has its own special materials. Woolen makes, cashmere, or fine cloth; velvets, plain or fancy; poplin, striped or plain; scilleenne, a mixture of wool and silk, are all now in favor. Passementerie and fringe, mixed with jet and beads, is still much used. Tabliers are made entirely of passementerie; they are rounded at the sides, and finished off by wide sash-ends of moire, forming a trimming to the skirt, and a passementerie trimming to match is made for the bodice.

Buttons of innumerable styles are to be seen, and, as we mentioned last month, are quite important accessories to a toilet just now. The robes "Princesses," without tunics or upper skirts are much worn for dressy occasions.

The breadths of trained skirts are cut in unequal lengths, augmenting in length as they approach the back; they are quite even at the top, the bottom of the skirt being rounded to form the train. The puffs, though still worn, show a very decided decrease of their former exaggerated size; they are formed in the manner we have before described by the back breadths being cut longer, and plaited or gathered in at the side.

Tunics are very much less worn; they are, however, still in use, made very short in front, rather longer behind, either draped at the sides so as to form a pouff, or the two ends tied loosely across under a buckle. Polonaises, if made of cloth, may be very plain, merely leaving a row of large buttons, and a hem with a double stitching all round; or they may be more elaborately trimmed with passementerie in plaques, tassels, and olives. The pockets which are so much worn, add very greatly to the style; they are made large, and placed in front, on the hips, or at the back. Sometimes there are five—two in front, two behind, and a small breast-pocket.

For evening costumes silk is at present the material most preferred; the shades of color that have been fashionable during the last month or two are still in vogue—the paler shades and those especially adapted for gas-light being reserved for full dress. For ball dress the bodices will be made low at the back, but higher in proportion to the front.

Crepe lisse, or gauze frills, are considered the most becoming. There is a softness about the shade and texture which renders it peculiarly becoming to the complexion. It should be made double or quadruple, with a ribbon placed along the centre hiding the plaits. A similar frill is also worn round the cuff and up the opening of the sleeve. There are some charming little gilets composed of white faille. Black velvet pockets are placed on the basques in front, and a small breast pocket is put on crossways. The buttons are of black velvet, and cords of jet and passementerie cross the plastron, in the style of the Hussar jacket.

For full evening toilet, lace, ribbon and flowers will be employed as trimmings. The latter, we are told, will be, many of them, of a very fanciful description—products of the artist's imagination; but although not to be found in *Flora's* dictionary, they produce, it is said, a very good effect under the gaslight.

There is but little change in the shape of hats and bonnets lately, but there is a slight difference in the way of putting them on. They are no longer placed so far back on the head as was the custom to wear them during the summer. The rage for buckles, arrows, and other ornaments of jet and steel continues. Mother-of-pearl is also beginning to be employed in this manner, not only for hats and bonnets, but for looping up tunics, or fastening ends and bows,

"BEST ROOMS."

I have always wondered what some people have best rooms for. It really is a mystery, for they always keep them closed and dark—no ray of sunlight ever peeps through the curtains or falls upon the carpet or pictures. Everything is cold and stiff, and a sort of awe-inspiring atmosphere pervades the entire room, and you feel involuntarily like raising your hat and making a profound bow when you enter.

A few times a year the apartment is aired, and two or three times opened for "grand company." But how uncongenial everything is. One feels just like walking on tiptoe; the children are sure to talk in whispers, and there is a pervading feeling that the carpet is too nice to walk on, the chairs too easy to be enjoyed, the pictures too beautiful to be commented upon, the books too handsomely bound to look at and read. So you sit bolt upright and talk politics and theology until you get as rigid as your surroundings.

Now, I don't like such rooms! I don't believe in having things that are too nice to be used;

they always make me nervous. If I have a nice dress, I want to wear it; if I have a nice pleasant room, I want to enjoy it when I have leisure, and not when I have a room full of company to entertain.

I always think soft carpets are to walk upon, easy chairs to lounge in, beautiful pictures to look at and admire, handsome books to read and talk about.

How I love to throw open the "best room" now and then and spend a quiet evening there; have a father and brother put on their dressing gowns and slippers—mother bring her knitting, and sisters their crochet and embroidery; have some one read a good entertaining story, or a sketch from some favorite author,—then play an innocent game of some sort, laugh and talk just as much as you please, or sing a pleasant, cheery song with the piano for accompaniment.

Presently father will begin one of his long, thrilling stories of his early life in a new country; mother will look complacently around upon the family group and think what a happy change time has wrought. How bright and happy those faces are around that hearthstone! Soon the clock gives warning that 'tis an hour past bedtime—and where has the time flown? Happy good-nights are spoken, and happier hearts think there is no place like home, and there isn't.

Now, this is what I call enjoyment, and putting our "best room" to a proper use; and I am confident that if more parents thought so, and would labor to make home the happiest place on earth, there would be far less dissipation and crime among our young men than there now is.

There is nothing that sheds such a glow of warmth through the soul as the feeling that there is one place on earth where we can find rest, and that is home; a place where we can enjoy the society of those most dear to us, and where all is peace and happiness.

Parents, open your "best room" occasionally, when only your own family is to grace it, and see how much comfort you can take, and how great an amount of happiness you will afford those over whom you have control.—*Mellie Willow.*

HOUSEHOLD RECEIPTS.

GINGERBREAD NUTS.— $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of butter, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of sugar, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of treacle, $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. ground ginger, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of flour; melt the butter, sugar, and treacle, pour it on to the flour, knead it well, let it stand for a few days before it is rolled into cakes, and bake in a slow oven.

COFFEE.—1 oz. of fine fresh-roasted coffee to each person, with one-third of a pint of hot water. This will make rather more than half a breakfast cup, then fill up with hot milk. On no account use chicory, which neutralises all the aromatic flavour of good coffee.

MILK SAUCE FOR PUDDINGS.—Have in a tin saucepan one tablespoonful of flour, three of sugar, four yolks of eggs, about a pint of milk, some essence of flavor, and mix the whole well. Set the pan on a somewhat slow fire; stir till it becomes rather thick. Take off, turn over the pudding, and serve.

WHIPPED CREAM.—Cream should be whipped in a very cool place the afternoon before wanted; flavor delicately with lemon or vanilla, and beat in a little of the finest-sifted white sugar. When it will stand up then heaped with a spoon put on a tammy that is only used for sweet things; place that on a dish in a cool larder to drain till wanted.

SANDWICHES.—Cut a thick slice of bread, and toast it brown on either side; when cold it must be split, and the meat then inserted, and the sandwich, instead of being dry, will retain all the moisture of fresh cut bread. A good lining for a sandwich is made with hard-boiled eggs cut in slices, and anchovies that have been washed and the bones removed.

KIDNEY TOAST.—Chop very fine some kidneys, and a little of the surrounding fat; season with salt, pepper, a little cayenne pepper, and grated lemon peel; warm this mixture with a little butter, then place on thin slices of toast, first beating up and adding one egg to the kidneys, place the toast in a dish with a little butter; brown them in an oven, and serve very hot. This is a very appetising little dish.

TARTARE SAUCE.—Stir into the yolk of a new-laid egg, drop by drop, a tablespoonful of salad oil; when well mixed, add by degrees a little chilli vinegar, a tablespoonful of vinegar, three teaspoonfuls of mustard, a little salt and pepper, and some finely chopped parsley; beat all until of the consistency of cream; cover closely, and set in cool place until wanted. It should be made four or five hours before being used.

A CHEAP PUDDING.—Peel and core four or five apples, according to their size, cut them in slices, and lay them in a pie dish; sprinkle them with sugar (pounded), then put a thin layer of apricot or other preserve. Take 2 oz. of arrow-root, mix it with a pint of milk, a little sugar, and a small piece of butter; stir it over the fire until it boils, then pour it into the pie dish with the apples and preserve and bake it until done.

SALMON PIE.—Clean a good piece of salmon; season it with nutmeg, salt, and pepper. Line a pie dish with a good crust, put in some pieces of butter, then lay in the fish. Take the flesh

from the tail of a large boiled lobster, chop it roughly, bruise the remainder of the lobster in a mortar, mix with it a sufficient quantity of rich melted butter, pour it on the salmon, add a little shred lemon rind. Cover the pie with a top crust, and bake it well.

TO CLEANSE PHIALS AND PIE PLATES.—Cleanse bottles that have medicines in them, by putting ashes in each, immersing them in cold water, and then heating the water gradually till it boils. After boiling an hour, let them remain in the water till it is cold. Wash them in soap suds, and rinse them till clear in fair water. Pie plates that have been long used for baking are apt to impart an unpleasant taste on account of the rancidity of the butter and lard imbibed. Put them in a brass kettle, with ashes and cold water, and boil them an hour.

BREAD PUDDING.—Soak a six or seven cent loaf of bread in milk for an hour; then squeeze it in your hands; place the squeezed bread in a bowl, and mix a little over a gill of milk with it; then mix again into it a little over an ounce of citron cut fine, four ounces of melted butter, four ounces of raisins, and four yolks of eggs. Beat the four whites of the eggs to a stiff froth, and mix them gently with the rest; rub a mould well with butter, which dust with bread-crumbs; turn the mixture into it, and fill until two-thirds full; place it in the oven (heated at about 400° F.) for forty minutes, and serve it hot or cold, with a sauce, as it may be liked.

PERPETUAL PASTE.—Dissolve a teaspoonful of alum in a quart of water. When cold, stir in as much flour as will give it the consistency of thick cream, being particular to beat up all the lumps; stir in as much powdered resin as will lay on a dime, and throw in half a dozen cloves to give it a pleasant odor. Have on the fire a teacup of boiling water, pour the flour mixture into it, stirring well at the time. In a few minutes it will be of the consistency of mush. Pour it into an earthen or china vessel; let it cool; lay a cover on, and put in a cool place. When needed for use, take out a portion and soften it with warm water. Paste thus made will last twelve months. It is better than gum, as it does not gloss the paper, and can be written on.

A DEPLORABLE CAREER.

Wonderful histories not unfrequently come to light at Colonial Police Courts, and one which was divulged a few weeks ago before one of the tribunals at Dunedin, the capital of the great province of Otago, was certainly of this character. A woman was placed before the magistrate who appeared to be about forty, and bore traces of remarkable beauty. She was a daughter of a country gentleman of good position in Lever's favorite county Galway, Ireland, and there made acquaintance with a captain in the army who was quartered in the neighborhood. A clandestine marriage took place, and eventually she accompanied him to India, where they were most kindly received by an uncle of her husband's, who had left England many years before and grown rich, but kept up no communication with his family. All went well for a time, until the intimacy between Mrs. C. and the colonel of her husband's regiment provoked indignant comment. The result was that her husband cast her off, and she resolved to return to Ireland. There, however, she found that her family, highly indignant with her disgraceful behavior, refused to see her, and she presently found herself once more on her way to India, to endeavor to soften the heart of her husband towards her. On the way out she made acquaintance with a gentleman so infatuated with her as to propose marriage, and, notwithstanding her husband at Calcutta, she accepted, and they were married on board. On reaching India he discovered the fraud and like her previous husband cast her aside, and she then discovered that her first (in fact her only real) husband had died, and left all the wealth which his rich uncle had bequeathed to him, to his relations.

Back again she went to Ireland once more, to find her parents dead, and her sisters resolute in their determination not to receive her. She then in some mysterious manner contrived to enter a family in London as governess, but being discovered by the lady of the house intruding with her husband, her educational career, there at least, came to an abrupt termination. And now her family, fearing no doubt she would bring some public scandal upon them, offered through their solicitor to send her to Melbourne. There she obtained employment as teacher in a public institution, her antecedents having, it may be presumed, been sedulously kept from the knowledge of the authorities. So sedate an occupation no doubt proved extremely unpalatable to one accustomed to a life of excitement, and she sought relief from ennui by such deep libations that she speedily received a *congé* here also.

From Melbourne she migrated to New Zealand, and going to the diggings took up with a digger, but her drunkenness soon disgusted even him, and she at length became an outcast on the streets of Dunedin, where she was placed before a magistrate on a charge almost weekly preferred against her of being a drunken disorderly vagrant.

Unhappily the great Australasian towns can produce a terrible muster of the better-days class, but the record of a career so terrible as this is rare even there.

MY ONLY LOVE.

My only love is always near,—
In country or in town
I see her twinkling feet, I hear
The whisper of her gown.

She foots it ever fair and young,
Her locks are tied in haste,
And one is o'er her shoulder flung.
And hangs below her waist.

She ran before me in the meads;
And down this world-worn track
She leads me on; but while she leads
She never gazes back.

And yet her voice is in my dreams,
To witch me more and more;
That wooing voice! Ah me, it seems
Less near me than of yore.

Lightly I sped when hope was high,
And youth beguiled the chase,—
I follow, follow still; but I
Shall never see her face!

THE ORPHAN.

BY M. H.

It was a stormy winter night and the earth was white with the snow when Doctor Chester, who had just come in from a round of visits and had seated himself comfortably before a glowing fire, heard the sound of music without, and a boy's voice, weak and thin, apparently from illness or destitution, if not from both, singing plaintively under his window.

"Heaven bless me!" cried the doctor, "what a night to be out in, much less a child; and he seems ill too! I'll throw the poor little fellow a penny."

He rose, for the music had now ceased, and went to the window, drawing back the thick, warm curtains preparatory to raising the sash.

The lad, who as yet did not see him, suddenly struck his instrument again and began to sing "Santa Lucia."

The doctor had first heard that air years and years before at Sorrento, and he had never heard it since without the orange groves, the blue Mediterranean, and the purple-clothed island of Capri rising before him. The spell was heightened now by the beautiful Italian face of the boy. The tears came to the good doctor's eyes.

"He looks famished; he is half dead with cold. I'll have him in," said Doctor Chester. "Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of one of these," he repeated to himself as if unconsciously as he crossed the room to ring the bell. "Oh, what a hard world this is for many," he went on, disconnectedly; "and it's Christmas time too."

He soon had the lad in, who, though so Italian-looking, proved to speak excellent English, for while the child was being warmed and fed the doctor cross-examined him.

Had he parents? No, not that he knew of; he had taken care of himself ever since he could remember. Was he born in Italy? No, he believed he had been born in England; he knew nothing in Italy except what little some Italian organ-grinders had told him. As far back as he knew he had lived by singing in the streets, now in one town, now in another.

The big, dark eyes looked at the doctor so appealingly that he became profoundly interested.

"Heaven," said Doctor Chester, to himself, "has sent me this waif. I am a bachelor; I will adopt him."

And he did. He did not spoil the child however. He had views of his own in regard to education, and Claud Chester early learned that he must rely on himself.

Old Doctor Chester soon after left the town where he first lived, and moved to a great city, where he acquired a large fortune by his practice. He lived long enough to see that his plan was a success. He saw the boy grow up a noble man, honoured and respected by all. And then he died and left his large fortune to his dear child, who used it well and wisely.

Young Doctor Chester, taught by the precepts and example of his benefactor, looked upon the poor and miserable as a legacy Heaven had left to the care of the more successful and happy ones. He thought the strong ought to bear the burdens of the weak. He looked upon his great wealth as a talent given him on trust, not to be used solely for his own glory and gratification, but as a loan for which he would surely have to give an account to its real owner.

Not an ascetic was he by any means. He did not think the kind Father would have placed so much beauty in His children's pathway below if it were wrong for them to enjoy it. He had a beautiful home filled with treasures of art. He was indeed a very happy man, as I think one can hardly fail to be who lives a full, complete life, in all the higher, nobler range of his faculties.

This fortunate doctor had won too the sweetest maiden in all the country for his promised wife.

Their acquaintance had begun with a chance meeting which took place during one of Doctor Chester's daily rides, and it had speedily ripened into mutual attachment.

Maud Willoughby was a beauty and an heir-

ess; but Doctor Chester had borne her off triumphantly from a crowd of suitors, and he considered himself a very happy and fortunate man in so doing; for he knew the loveliness of her soul far transcended the beauty of her face. She was, in truth, a very noble and lovely woman, sympathizing with him fully in all his nobler aims and pursuits. She was to him what I think every woman should be to the man she loves, a blessing and an inspiration.

It was a very pleasant evening in September. Maud Willoughby had been to spend the evening with an aunt, and Doctor Chester, chancing to call there just at the right time, walked at home with her under the pleasant starlight.

It was not a long walk to them, I will warrant, for they were talking of their future—they were to be married in December. Their minds were full of life and happiness—certainly death had no part in their thoughts. But as they crossed the stone-bridge that spanned the river, no other person being in sight at the time, they came suddenly upon a woman, who, but for Doctor Chester's strong arm would have "rashly importunate, gone to her death."

She was evidently just preparing to leap from the low side of the bridge when they caught sight of her, and dropping his companion's arm, Doctor Chester rushed forward, and, with one of his impetuous movements, he drew her back so suddenly that her head struck against the stone-work, making a small gash, from which the blood started.

"What do you mean?" he asked rather roughly, in his excitement, as he raised her to an upright position upon the ground where she had fallen.

"I mean to die," answered the woman; and, as her tattered hood fell back, it revealed a face, once beautiful, of a woman of about forty, but now haggard, wasted, looking like the face of the dying.

"What right have you to throw your life away in this manner?"

"What right have you to save it?" said the woman, trying to wipe the blood from her forehead with her tattered shawl.

Just at this moment Maud came up, and the sight of the cowering form, bending with sorrow and guilt, and the pale face, from which the blood was streaming, was too much for her tender, womanly little heart, and with tears starting in her blue eyes she said:

"Poor woman, I am so sorry for you."

At these words of sympathy and compassion, perhaps the first she had heard since she had need of them, the stolid, hardened look of the woman's face melted into one of suffering. And so Maud bent down, in her gentle compassion, and laid her soft, white hand upon the poor, bruised head; the woman lifted her eyes to the pitiful, sweet face, and then, covering her own distorted feature with her hands, she burst into a passion of tears and sobs that shook her like a tempest, in which one might read hopelessness for the present, despair for the future, remorse for the evil-doing that had ruined her, regret, oh! such deep and poignant regret—for the lost purity and innocence that were once hers, but lost to her now—lost to her for ever.

I think the angel of this woman—for I believe we all have an angel to attend us through this life, who is grieved at our misdoing and rejoiced at our efforts at good—who must have wept over her if angels ever weep—smiled as those tears flowed faster and faster; for it is not in such remorseful tears that our soul-stains are washed away and become less scarlet?

Oh, ye philanthropists! who regard the suffering mass of blackened humanity, surging beneath you as a turbid tide, to be checked and turned back by loud words of righteous indignation; ye who scatter, from barred and inaccessible palace windows, largess of glittering words of wisdom to be scrambled for by the crowd beneath; ye who fit coats of advice of excellent warp and woof to the shivering backs of dinners, to be given on application; ye who drop religious tracts from gloved fingers, "The Beauties of the Heavenly Home," on the bare floors of hovels, or "Food for the Sick Soul," to be taken on an empty stomach; ye whose words of rebuke and denunciation have been like a whirlwind and a devouring flame, how many hearts have you melted by your wholesome method of reformation? How many tears have you caused to gush, like this woman's with remorse and repentance? Lo! here they flow, not by words of rebuke and warning, but by the touch of a pitying hand upon the poor, sinful head; by a word of true sympathy coming from a heart full of tenderness and compassion for all suffering creatures, but, most of all for erring ones!

"Where is your home?" asked Dr. Chester, at last.

"Home!" sobbed the woman. "If I had a home should I be here?"

"Well, you must stay somewhere. If you will tell me where you live, after I have seen this lady home, I will come back and go with you. I don't think you are fit to go alone."

"I can go alone," said she, rising to her feet and drawing her thin shawl round her shoulders.

But as she stood up, she reeled, and almost fell, and was obliged to sit down again.

"I am afraid you are very ill," said Maud. "I will come and see you to-morrow, if you will tell me where."

The woman named one of the lowest localities in the city.

"You will stay here till I come back?" said Dr. Chester.

The woman bowed silently.

Mr. Willoughby's house was only just round

the corner, and he returned quickly, and found the woman sitting there in the same old place.

"Now, I will go with you," said he.

She rose to her feet, but as she did so she tottered and almost fell.

"Take my arm," said Dr. Chester.

The woman gave him a wondering glance, but obeyed, and laid her hand, defiled by the clasp of sin, where the white hand of Maud Willoughby had so lately been.

I think it was with a thrill of repulsion that Dr. Chester gave this a passing thought as he felt the outcast's shrinking touch upon his arm. But he certainly gave no outward manifestation of it; and the strangely assorted couple wended their way down the street; past splendid mansion, with stone walls facing the street—walls that men had built high, and thick, and strong, to fence out the black wolves of the street from the white lambs within; past churches, where priestly hands are raised in benediction over the kneeling worshippers; where, in response to the intoned expostulation, "Let your light so shine before men," bounteous amounts are subscribed for the heathen, happily wandering under his native palm-trees, over tropical vegetation, warmer and softer to bare feet than the icy pavements of our cities, where eloquent words of admonition and consolation are addressed to the poor; past squalid houses with shutterless, broken windows, as if clamoring to tell their wild secrets of crime and want and horror to the respectable stranger passing beneath; where the air was putrid, as if reeking with moral miasma as well as physical.

They turned, finally, round the corner of a tall tenement-house into a damp alley, where the bright moonlight fought with mysterious shadows. Here the woman paused and opened a door. As she did so a current of cold, almost icy air struck Dr. Chester, as if from a charnel-house. He had a little pocket-lantern, and this he lit, looking round the bare room.

"Good Heavens!" he said, "can a human being call this home?"

We read of the sufferings of the poor in our great cities, as we do of desert siroccos, or northern glaciers and avalanches; something with which we have nothing to do, only to feel a sort of mild compassion.

Indeed, if Mr. A., who is rather tender-hearted, feels a really keen emotion of pity in reading of these sufferings he blandly congratulates himself as being much better than neighbor B., who feels no interest, and indeed always doubts the truth of so much suffering.

Dr. Chester thought that a dreamy pity, exhausted in compassionate reveries on silken couches, and by warm hearth-stones, did not really amount to much. He thought that if he said to his woman, for instance, "My dear madam, depart in peace; be ye warmed and fed," it was not all that was necessary for her comfort. His old nurse was married now, and kept a small boarding-house in the suburbs of the city; and he knew that for his sake she would take the stranger in, and make her dying hours comfortable; for, with the keen insight of his profession, he knew she had not many days to live.

Even while he was thinking of this the woman sank down upon the bare, broken floor in a deathly fainting fit.

He took her up and laid her upon the pile of rags that served as a bed, then he took his medicine case out of his pocket and gave her a restorative.

After a few minutes she opened her eyes, and as the rays of the lantern fell full upon his face she sat up and cried, hoarsely:

"Man! man! are you a fiend, that you keep your youth and beauty, while I—Look at me! Look at your work!"

He thought it was only the raving of a momentary delirium, and he said some soothing words to her.

But she didn't notice them. She looked full in his face, with her large hollow eyes.

"Who are you?"

"I am Doctor Chester. I found you on the bridge, you know. Here, take some of this cordial."

He was holding it in his hand, and the light fell directly upon a ring that he wore upon his little finger.

It was a peculiar ring, a circle of dusky gold, clasping a crescent formed of three rubies.

She looked at it intently.

"How did you get that ring?"

He thought her mind was wandering still.

"Here, take this cordial," he replied. "I wouldn't talk any more now."

She obeyed him silently and sank down on the pile of rags.

Dr. Chester left her that night in the care of a woman who occupied another part of the tenement, and in the morning he removed her to the boarding-house, where the clean, quiet room seemed like a palace to the outcast.

Here Maud Willoughby came often to see her.

Dr. Chester attended her faithfully and more-over procured the co-operation of another medical practitioner, and the woman's gratitude and devotion to him seemed boundless, but it was evident that her days were numbered.

One day, soon after her removal, she said to the old woman who had charge of her:

"That is a singular ring that Dr. Chester wears."

"Yes," said the old lady, and with the garrulity of old age she went on to tell a long story of how her master, old Dr. Chester—they lived in another city then—had heard a lad singing at his window one stormy night; how he adopted the boy; how the only thing the child had of

value was a curious ring, and how, after he got large enough, he had always worn it.

Then she told her of their removal thence, and that not a soul knew but what Claud was the old gentleman's nephew; and then, after pledging her to secrecy, for she vowed it was the first time the story had ever passed her lips, she waxed eloquent over the subject nearest her heart, of the goodness of her young master, his kindness, and his generosity.

The woman listened with the hot tears falling fast and unnoticed upon her pillow, for the twilight was enwrapping the room in sombre shadow.

At the woman's request Dr. Chester and Maud read to her often, from the Bible, the sweet Psalms of David, and the prophets' inspired words. But most of all did she love to hear of Him who, renouncing heaven to dwell with sorrowing humanity, went about doing good, patient with a world that rejected Him—a world He gave Himself for.

She never made any reference to her past life but once, though it was evident from her conversation that she had received the education of a lady.

It was in this way, whenever Dr. Chester was in her presence, she would gaze up into his face with a look of almost worshipful gratitude; and one day, when she had been looking at him so long and so earnestly, she said to Maud, after he left the room, as if in apology for her scrutiny:

"He looks like some one I knew—some one I loved long ago."

Maud did not reply, and the woman went on, speaking as if more to herself than to her.

"Oh, how I loved that man! I had never known what love was when I met him, a poor drudge of a governess. He had such beautiful eyes; he was an Italian. And when he offered love to me—or its poor counterfeit, how could I tell?—I followed it whither it led me. Oh, if we could only undo the past!"

Her excitement left her soon in such a deathly state that Maud, alarmed, called in Dr. Chester, who was still in the next room.

It was the last day though. They had hardly thought her end was so near. She had been very restless through the day, and toward night, as Dr. Chester bent over her, she looked up in his face with a look of wistfulness, longing and love, and then she shut her eyes, and turned her face toward the wall, and they heard her murmur:

"Oh, my boy! If I could only have one kiss from my boy, when I am dying—when I am dying!"

"She is thinking of some child she has lost," whispered Maud to Dr. Chester.

"Yes," murmured the woman, "a child she has lost."

In a few minutes Dr. Chester was called out of the room for a while. The woman followed him with her eager, hungry gaze, till the door closed on him.

Then she said to Maud:

"You love him?"

"Yes."

"You are to be his wife?"

"Yes, if Heaven spare our lives."

"Heaven bless you both!" and then after a minute she went on, "Some time, in the future, as you sit in your happy home, maybe you with a child in your arms, perhaps a little boy that looks like him—it would make you happier to have it look like him—just such a noble, tender eyes—like, yet unlike the eyes I knew, because truer than they were—"

"Yes, oh, yes!"

Maud's eyes were softened by the sweet home-picture the woman was drawing, while her cheeks were hot with blushes.

"If in that happy home, in your happy hearts, a thought of me, of the poor wanderer, should ever come, how would you think of me?"

"Kindly and tenderly," cried Maud, through her hot tears.

"Yes, kindly and tenderly, that is in both of your hearts; they should never know a regret or a care that I could save them from."

But after a short pause she continued again, for the picture she was drawing of the possible future seemed to have a strange fascination for her.

"I know you will make him happy. He will work hard, for he is a toiler in life, following his Divine Master, going about doing good, in weariness often. But in your love, in your bright, happy home, he will find his reward, his rest, his happiness. I love to think how peaceful that home will be; no sorrowful memories no shame, no regret to darken that bright fire-side; and if a thought of me, of the poor stranger should ever come, let it come as a blessing, a benediction."

Again she paused for a minute, and then she said:

"Is that his Bible?"

"Yes, do you want it?" for she had reached out her gaunt hand for the book.

"Yes, let me take it."

Maud took it from the stand, and handed it to her. The dying woman took it, and held it in her trembling hands.

"He has held it in his hands a great many times?"

"Yes."

"Read it often—read often of the wonderful Divine Master he is following?"

"Yes."

She put it on the pillow, and laid her cheek upon it.

"What was it you read me yesterday in your book about the sins of the world?"

Maud took up her Prayer-book and read from the Litany;

"Thou that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us."

"Have mercy upon us," repeated the woman.

After a time she sank into a troubled sleep, in which, at first, she murmured fitful words—sometimes of life's weary toils and sorrows, sometimes of childish plays and games.

The sleep grew deeper and more quiet, and just as the day was breaking in the East without a struggle or change of feature she passed into the presence of that Judge who, if He is just, is, well for us poor sinners, merciful also.

Dr. Chester buried her in a quiet corner of the church-yard, and there he raised a white cross over her grave. On it was carved no name, for they knew not her name, but only these words, which had seemed to soothe her dying moments.

"Thou that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us!"

And Dr. Chester never dreamed that that mute prayer carved in marble was breathed over the grave of his mother.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS.

SIMPLE METHOD OF DETECTING ADULTERATION OF WINE.—Into a small quantity of the wine to be tested, says *Le Temps*, drop a piece of potash. If no deposit is formed, and the wine assumes a greenish tint, it has not been artificially colored. If, however, a violet deposit appears, elder or mulberries have been used. If the deposit be red, the adulteration is sugar beet; if violet red, campeachy wood; if violet blue, privet berries; if clear blue, coloring matter obtained from sun flowers.

HEARTH AND HOME.—This popular weekly journal has just commenced the publication of a charming new story, entitled, "*John Andross*," by Mrs. REBECCA HARDING DAVIS, the well-known author of "*Life in the Iron Mills*," "*Dallas Gairbraith*," "*Waiting for the Verdict*," etc. Without doubt, Mrs. Davis is one of the very best story-writers in America, and, having given more than usual care and labor to the preparation of "*John Andross*," the reading public may confidently expect in it one of her best works.

BALLOONING IN ASHANTEE.—Mr. Coxwell, the celebrated aeronaut, writes on the subject of scientific ballooning in time of war. He says—"If one out of the thousands of tons of railway iron had given place to a few hundredweights of aerostatic equipment, I venture to think we should have been better informed as to the camp at Mampon, and have seen clearly the best and shortest cut to Coomassie. We should also have gained a great deal of other valuable information so easily afforded by an aeronautic survey of an unknown country."

REPEATING RIFLES.—The question of arming the Italian troops with a repeating rifle, which was agitated after the war as a means of more than counterbalancing the power of the chassepot, seems again to be seriously entertained. A contract has been recently entered into for supplying eighty-four of the Vetterli rifles to each line regiment as an experiment. The Vetterli patent is that already adopted by the Swiss troops, who are now nearly all armed with it. It carries the spare cartridges in a long chamber underneath the barrel, and can deliver twelve shots in succession without taking down from the shoulder.

COUNT JARNAC is now spoken of as the probable Ambassador from France to England. He lives at Thomastown, Kilkenny, and his mother was a daughter of the Duke of Leinster. He is locally connected with the neighborhood by having married his cousin, Geraldine Augusta, sister of the late Thomas Henry, Lord Foley. He was the Royal Commissioner selected by the French Government (King Louis Philippe) in 1840, to receive and bring back the remains of the late Emperor Napoleon from St. Helena. As he speaks English just as well and perfectly as a native, he is peculiarly fitted, as far as this goes, and is certainly well qualified in all other respects, for the ambassadorial post.

"ST. NICHOLAS" AND "OUR YOUNG FOLKS."—The publishers of *St. Nicholas*, Scribner's Illustrated Magazine for Girls and Boys, take pleasure in announcing that by an arrangement with Messrs. J. R. Osgood & Co., their popular Magazine *Our Young Folks* has been merged in *St. Nicholas*. In addition to the striking novelties and great literary and artistic attractions already offered by *St. Nicholas*, the best features of *Our Young Folks* will be retained. *St. Nicholas* has been enlarged, new contributions have been secured; among them a serial story by J. T. Trowbridge, late editor of *Our Young Folks*, which begins in the present number. Other eminent writers well known to the readers of *Our Young Folks* have been engaged. The managers are thus enabled to present to the public a Magazine for children and youth, superior in every respect to any ever before published.

IMITATION OF MARBLE.—Imitations of marble are in great demand for ornamentation, and many different compounds are used for the purpose. Mr. Pichler, a glider in Vienna, from his own experience, recommends the following composition as being simple and satisfactory:—Into one pound of best joiner's glue, boiled rather thick,

half a pound of rosin (colophonium) is to be slowly stirred. (Instead of the rosin the same quantity of Venetian turpentine may be used.) Into this plastic mass is worked a mixture of powdered chalk and of any mineral color of the desired shade, and after the addition of a little olive oil it is ready for moulding. It is sometimes convenient to have the material in the shape of thin sheets to be cut as required and in this case the mass is rolled out upon a slightly heated plate. Mr. Pichler asserts that this composition hardens rapidly, and can be easily polished. When kept for a length of time it should be wrapped in a moist sheet, and exposed to gentle heat before using. The variegated marble-like veins can also be produced by kneading together differently colored portions of this mass.

A GOOD STORY.—In Dr. Guthrie's Autobiography a story is told of an examination of witnesses in a charge of drunkenness against a minister. Besides other proofs of drunkenness, having drawn this out of a witness, that the minister on one occasion as he lolled over the side of the pulpit—being, in fact, unable to stand upright—said that he loved his people so much that he would carry them all to Heaven on his back, Dr. Guthrie asked him, "Now, John, when you heard him say so, what impression did so strange a speech make on you?" Others, to the same question, as unwilling witnesses as John, had already said that, though they would not say he was drunk at the time, they certainly thought so. But John showed himself equal to the occasion. "Well," he replied, "Maister Guthrie, I'll just tell ye what I thought. There was a great fat wife, you see, sitting in the seat before me, and thinks I—'My lad, if you set off to the kingdom of Heaven with that wife on your back, my certie, you'll no be back for the rest o' us in a hurry.'"

TRANSPARENT PAPER.—A German invention, recently patented, has for its object the rendering more or less transparent of paper used for writing or drawing, either with ink, pencil, or crayon, and also to give the paper such a surface that such writing or drawing may be completely removed by washing, without in any way injuring the paper. The object of making the paper translucent is that when used in school the scholars can trace the copy, and thus become proficient in the formation of letters without the explanations usually necessary; and it may also be used in any place where tracings may be required, as by laying the paper over the object to be copied it can be plainly seen. Writing paper is used by preference, its preparation consisting in first saturating it with benzine, and then immediately coating the paper with a suitable, rapidly drying varnish before the benzine can evaporate. The application of varnish is by preference made by plunging the paper in a bath of it, but it may be applied with a brush or sponge. The varnish is prepared of the following ingredients:—Boiled bleached linseed oil, 20 lb.; lead shavings, 1 lb.; oxide of zinc, 5 lb.; Venetian turpentine, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. Mix and boil eight hours. After cooling, strain, add white gum copal, 5 lb., and gum sandarac, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb.—*Journal of Applied Science.*

HOW BIRDS LEARN TO SING AND BUILD.—What is instinct? It is the "faculty of performing complex acts absolutely without instruction, or previously acquired knowledge." Instinct, then, would enable animals to perform spontaneously acts which, in the case of man, presuppose ratiocination, a logical train of thought; but when we test the observed facts which are usually put forward to prove power of instinct, it is found that they are seldom conclusive. It was on such grounds that the song of birds was taken to be innate; albeit a very ready experiment would have shown that it comes from the education they receive. During the last century, Barrington brought up some linnets, taken from the nest, in company with larks of sundry varieties, and found that every one of the linnets adopted completely the song of the master set over them, so that now these linnets—larks by naturalization—form a company apart, when placed among birds of their own species. Even the nightingale, whose native sound is so sweet, exhibits, under domestication, a considerable readiness to imitate other singing birds. The song of the bird is, therefore, determined by its education, and the same must be true to nest-building. A bird brought up in a cage does not construct the nest peculiar to its species. In vain will you supply all the necessary materials; the birds will employ them without skill, and will oftentimes even renounce all purpose of building anything like a nest. Does not this well-known fact prove that, instead of being guided by instinct, the bird learns how to construct his nest, just as a man learns how to build a house?

THE PROGRESS OF THE GERMAN NAVY.—The *Börsen Zeitung* says that the "*Borussia*" and "*Hansa*" will probably be ready to take part in the operations of the German navy by the 17th of March next, which will be the tenth anniversary of the battle of Rugen. Prussian ships were on that occasion engaged for the first time against a hostile fleet, and since then Germany has acquired a navy which is not only capable of encountering an enemy on the high seas, but is a complete protection to the German coasts. Another important circumstance, adds the writer, is that all the parts of the two ships mentioned above are, with the exception of the iron plates ordered in England, being entirely constructed by native industry, so that Germany can now go on increasing her navy without foreign assistance. The German ship-building society "*Vulcan*" has proceeded with the construction of the "*Borussia*" almost as rapidly as the English ship-builders have done with the construction of

the two other ironclad frigates which are being built for the German Government. At present Germany has six frigates and a corvette; she stands, therefore, sixth in the list of the naval powers of Europe, just under Austria. But in the year 1875 her fleet will probably be increased by the two ironclad frigates which are now being built at Wilhelmshaven and Kiel, in which case Germany would stand fifth, next to Italy. The first place is occupied by England; Russia will by that time very likely attain the second place, and after her will come France, Italy, and Germany.

SCIENTIFIC AND USEFUL.

TO DISGUISE CASTOR OIL.—Put 2 drops of cinnamon into an ounce of glycerine and add an ounce of castor oil. Children will take it and ask for more.

SINAPISMS.—In making a plaster, use no water whatever, but mix the mustard with the white of an egg, and the result will be a plaster which will "draw" perfectly, but will not produce a blister even upon the skin of an infant, no matter how long it is allowed to remain upon the part.

REMEMBER THAT A RAW EGG WILL CLEAR YOUR THROAT OF FISH-BONES. Put one in a little hot wine, add some sugar, and the fish-bones will slip down all the easier. P.S.—You can take the egg, wine, and sugar, anyhow. They're good as a preventive; and you don't know what moment you may get a fish-bone in your throat.

HOW TO SWALLOW A PILL.—The *Chicago Medical Times* is responsible for the following:—"Put the pill under the tongue and behind the teeth, and let the patient immediately take a large swallow of water, and he will neither feel the pill nor taste it. In fact, they cannot tell where it has gone, and I have seen them look about the floor to see if they had not dropped it."

BALDNESS.—The following lotion is said to be superior for a shampooing liquid, for removing dandruff, and useful and pleasant application for baldness. It is, of course, moderately stimulating, and in those cases in which the hair-follicles are not destroyed, but have become merely inactive, we should think it might prove both efficacious and agreeable:—

Take of acetic acid 1 drachm.
Cologne water. 1 ounce.
Water, to make in all..... 6 ounces.
M.

THE CURE OF THE CRAVING FOR STIMULANTS.—Dr. Brunton has been writing letters to the *British Messenger* on the temptation to drunkenness caused by the craving for stimulants felt by some people. He furnishes, says the *Medical Press and Circular*, prescriptions which he believes will overcome this craving, and which, we presume, are to be obtained by his readers at the nearest chemists. Here are two of them:—1st. Put a quarter of an ounce of iron and half an ounce of magnesia in an ordinary quart bottle, and fill it up with peppermint water. A wine-glassful to be taken three or four times a day. Instead of the peppermint water an infusion of dried peppermint may be used. It may be made stronger or weaker according to the taste of the patient, and should be allowed to cool before it is added to the sulfate of iron and magnesia. A little gum-arabic or gum-tragacanth added to the mixture will keep the magnesia better suspended, but this may perfectly well be omitted. The bottle should be shaken before the dose is poured out. 2nd. Take an ounce of quassia chips and pour over them as much cold water as will fill three quart bottles. Let them stand an hour, and then strain. Add to the strained liquid $\frac{1}{2}$ fluid drachms of the solution of iron, sold under the name of "*Liquor Ferri Perchloridi*." Two tablespoonfuls or half a wine-glassful to be taken three or four times a day. The iron solution may be measured out with a teaspoon, one teaspoonful being equal to one fluid drachm; but teaspoons vary in size, and it is therefore better to use a glass measure, which may be bought at any chemist's. No doubt there are many cases in which chalybeate is indicated, but it may be questioned whether it would not be wiser of those who wish to try the plan to ask a medical man first. The value of such advice is indicated by the following remarks appended by Dr. Brunton to the recipes we have quoted:—"When the person's tongue is pale, flabby, and marked with the teeth at the edges, the second prescription may be found more useful than the first. When there is any tendency to flatulence the first should be taken a quarter of an hour before meals and if either of them causes uneasiness when taken on an empty stomach, they should be used immediately after meals. In the presence of a robust habit or florid complexion, the following prescription, which I owe to the kindness of Mr. John Groom, of Hampstead, may be found more serviceable than either of the preceding. Add one ounce of bruised gentian root to one quart of boiling water. Let this stand four hours; then strain off the liquor, and add two drachms of carbonate of ammonia. A wine-glassful may be taken two or three times a day when the craving comes on. This prescription was used by Mr. Fox (now of Brighton) when surgeon of Bedford Gaol. Though I have recommended it in certain cases in preference to the other prescription, it may be used by all who are addicted to the use of intoxicating drinks."

HUMOROUS SCRAPS.

A BACHELOR'S party—A spinster, of course.
A CRYING sin—Taking babies to the theatre.
The most popular general—General Holliday.

DOCTOR'S motto—"Patients and long suffering."

SHOEMAKER'S motto—"Never too late to mend."

PROMISSORY notes—Tuning the fiddles before the performance commences.

SAGEY—The man who is fond of puddings and pies places himself fearfully in the power of his wife.

AN old maid, speaking of marriage, says it is like any other disease—while there's life there's hope.

LADIES AND BILLS—Ladies are said to be like bills of exchange, because they ought to be settled at maturity.

PASSING A POINT—A bridal procession in the East-end was four hours in passing a given point. That point was a tavern.

SHOCKING—A French writer has described a young lady as a creature that ceases to kiss gentlemen at twelve, and begins again at twenty.

A CANNY WIFE.—Said a Scotchwoman to a physician, who was weighing two grains of calomel for a child, "Dinna be so mean wi' it; it's for a poor fatherless bairn!"

A CITIZEN of Rutland wants to bet that his wife can walk five hundred miles in three weeks. He is willing to lose the wager if she can only be induced to undertake the job.

A MELANCHOLY CASE OF SUICIDE.—A sweet and lovely little girl, a daughter of one of the first families in Lancashire, on being threatened with a whipping a few days ago, hung her head!

WHAT relation is a loaf of bread to a locomotive?—Its mother. Why?—Because bread is a necessity, and a locomotive an invention, and we all know that necessity is the mother of invention.

THE CHEESE.—At an examination in a public elementary school, a class was asked the derivation of the word "mighty." The youngest boy of the third class promptly replied, "Old cheese." The master ordered that boy to be removed to a higher class.

In a Nashua court recently, a juror asked to be excused because he was deaf, although there were reasons for supposing that his hearing was not affected. "He is excused," said the judge, "for if he is deaf we don't want him, and if he is a liar we don't want him either."

WELCOME.—"Who's there?" said Jenkins, one cold winter night, disturbed in his repose by some one knocking at the street door. "A friend," was the answer. "What do you want?" "Want to stay here all night." "Queer taste—stay there by all means," was the benevolent reply.

PUNCTUAL.—An apothecary, who, in everything connected with business, was a perfect pattern of punctuality and exactitude, had lately the misfortune to lose his wife. At the hour of her interment, he placed the following placard upon the door of his shop:—"Gone to bury my wife; return in half an hour."

WOMEN AND LOOKING-GLASSES.—A married man says a looking-glass affords a woman a marvellous amount of comfort and gratification. He says his wife thinks just as much of consulting her glass when she ties on her apron as when she ties on her bonnet. When there is a knock at the door, he goes there at once; but his wife, on the contrary, ejaculates, "Mercy, Joseph! who's that!" and dashes for the looking-glass the first thing.

ON one occasion Edwin Forrest, then a young man, gave a tremendous display of really powerful acting. He was supposed to represent a Roman warrior, and to be attacked by three minions of a detested tyrant. At the rehearsal Mr. Forrest found a great deal of fault with the supers who condescended to play the minions. They were too tame. They didn't lay hold of him. They didn't go in as if it was a real fight. Mr. Forrest stormed and threatened; the supers skulked and consulted. At length the captain of the supers inquired, in his local slang, "Yer want this to be a bully fight, eh?" "I do," replied Mr. Forrest. "All right," rejoined the captain, and the rehearsal quietly proceeded. In the evening the little theatre was crowded, and Mr. Forrest was enthusiastically received. When the lighting scene occurred the great tragedian took the centre of the stage, and the six minions entered rapidly and deployed in skirmishing order. At the cue "Seize him!" one minion assumed a pugilistic attitude, and struck a blow straight from the shoulder upon the prominent nose of the Roman hero, another raised him about six inches from the stage by a well directed kick, and the others made ready to rush in for a decisive lussel. For a moment Mr. Forrest stood astounded, his broad chest heaving with rage, his great eyes flashing fire, his sturdy legs planted like columns upon the stage. Then came a few minutes of powerful acting, at the end of which one super was seen sticking head foremost in the base drum in the orchestra, four were having their wounds dressed in the green room, and one, finding himself in the flies, rushed out upon the roof of the theatre, and shouted fire at the top of his voice; while Mr. Forrest, called before the curtain, bowed his thanks pauntingly to the applauding audience, who looked upon the whole affair as part of the piece, and "had never seen Forrest act so splendidly."

OUR PUZZLER.

10. CHARADE.

A curious illness my first doth show,
To which the grumblers are always heir;
My next is a cousin, or uncle, or aunt;
My whole is of earthenware.

II. LOGOGRIPH.

Along the road, in days gone by,
It toiled so slow and wearily.
What is it that I mean?
Add but a simple letter, pray,
Then see, it travels on its way
With speed untired, I ween.

12. CHARADE.

Sing me a song that is my first,
For my second is sad and sore;
For the joy that is past I still hunger and thirst,
It will never return to me more.
Weary and worn, though I wander free,
For my whole that I loved ran away from me.

13. ENIGMAS.

Now list to me, I am a comical wight,
Always wand'ring away, both by day and by night;
And at running, I'll wager I beat any man,
Tho' I can't boast of legs, like humanity can,
And am apt to fall down, giving vent to loud cries—
But again I rush on without stopping to rise;
And though I do this all the live-long year through,
I am confined to my bed, I declare unto you.
I've a head that is large, but no ears and no eyes,
And a mouth that is still more capacious in size.
And now, gentle reader, consider me well.
And my name I am certain you'll very soon tell.

14. CHARADE.

I sat by the side of my love,
Admiring her first passing fair;
And praising the delicate second,
Encircling my first that was there.
I told her a present I'd bought,
When a modest blush to her face stole;
Not waiting to know what she thought,
I placed round my first my bright whole.

15. VERBAL PUZZLES.

Two L's, one H, one O, one A, and one R,
Will give the name of a distinguished etcher.

16. CHARADE.

My first is placed in Chancery,
And often wears my second;
My whole to keep my second safe
A useful place is reckon'd.

17. ENIGMA.

In battle-fields and fields of peace I'm found;
I cause much bloodshed, or I stanch the wound
I may be of a cereal kind, or hard
As steel itself, and held in much regard.
Within your waistcoat pocket I may be,
And mend a pen, or grow on grassy lea.
I am considered sharp—a man may be;
If you are both, then you can answer me.

18. ENIGMA.

A very crooked thing am I,
Of almost every size;
And in a child's first copy-book
My form you'll recognise.
I'm found in almost every ship
That ever puts to sea;
And yachts and boats of every size
Have all a place for me.
I am to all fresh water fish
An instrument of slaughter;
When once they got within my clutch,
They never hope for quarter.
Now ladies, at your toilettes, you
A friend in me possess;
Tho' like a vain and silly girl,
I'm much attached to dress.

19. CHARADE.

My primal you will often see
In meadow fields or flowery lea,
Or in the restless times of old.
My second, wheresoever seen,
Is always incomplete, I ween;
It is what dearest friends must do
Some time or other, false or true.
My total, in a fortress strong,
Is oft a scene where hundreds throngs.
It may be broken down, and show
A scene of massacre and woe.

20. DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

My first, it was worn by the clergy of old.
My next, an Italian, conspiring and bold.
My third, you can feel it, but never can see.
My last, where the fair and the rich only be.
The primals will show a treasure dear,
Which help my finals to make Christmas

[cheer.]

ANSWERS.

182. WORD PUZZLES.—1. Deer; 2. Room;
3. Pat; 4. Door; 5. Lever; 6. Trap; 7. Drab;
8. Live; 9. Salta.

183. PUZZLE.—V. I. S. A. G. E.

184. PHONETIC CHARADE.—Fan-at-tick (fanatic).

185. METAGRAMS.—1. Dean, bean, kean, lean;
2. Harry, tarry, marry, Larry; 3. Lark, mark, hark, bark, sark.

186. ANIMALS.—1. Antelope; 2. Boar; 3. Rabbit; 4. Monkey; 5. Jackall; 6. Gnu; 7. Buffalo; 8. Ape; 9. Leopard; 10. Wolf; 11. Moose; 12. Crocodile.

187. CHARADES.—Semi-circle; 2. Brother-in-law.

MARK TWAIN AND THE NOBILITY.

The following letter was recently addressed by Mark Twain to the *London Morning Post*, and that paper publishes it as a "curious specimen of transatlantic puffery:—"

SIR,—Now that my lecturing engagement is drawing to its close, I find that there is one attraction which I forgot to provide, and that is the attendance of some great member of the Government to give distinction to my entertainment. Strictly speaking, I did not really forget this or underrate its importance, but the truth was I was afraid of it. I was afraid of it for the reason that those great personages have so many calls upon their time that they cannot well spare the time to sit out an entertainment, and I knew that if one of them were to leave his box and retire while I was lecturing it would seriously embarrass me. I find, however, that many people think I ought not to allow this lack to exist longer; therefore I feel compelled to reveal a thing which I had intended to keep a secret. I early applied to a party at the East End, who is in the same line of business as Madame Tussaud, and he agreed to lend me a couple of kings and some nobility, and he said that they would sit out my lecture, and not only sit it out but that they wouldn't even leave the place when it was done, but would just stay where they were, perfectly infatuated, and wait for more. So I made a bargain with him at once, and was going to ask the newspapers to mention, in the usual column, that on such and such an evening His Majesty King Henry VIII would honour my entertainment with his presence, and that on such and such an evening His Majesty William the Conqueror would be present, and that on the succeeding evening Moses and Aaron would be there, and so on. I felt encouraged now; an attendance like that would make my entertainment all that could be desired, and besides, I would not be embarrassed by their going away before my lecture was over. But now misfortune came. In attempting to move Henry VIII to my lecture hall, the porter fell down stairs and utterly smashed him all to pieces; in the course of moving William the Conqueror, something let go and all the sawdust burst out of him, and he collapsed and withered away to nothing before my eyes. Then we collared some Dukes, but they were so seedy and decayed that nobody would ever have believed in their rank; and so I gave them up, with almost a broken heart. In my trouble I had nothing in the world left to depend on now but just Moses and Aaron, and I confess to you that it was all I could do to keep the tears back when I came to examine those two images and found that that man, in his unapproachable ignorance, had been exhibiting in Whitechapel for Moses and Aaron what any educated person could see at a glance, by the ligature, were only the Siamese Twins.

You see now, Sir, that I had done all that a man could do to supply a complaint of lack, and if I have failed, I think I ought to be pitied, not blamed. I wish I could get a king somewhere, just only for a little while, and I would take good care of him and send him home, and pay the cab myself.

London, Dec. 10.

MARK TWAIN.

SHERRY POISON.

Old-fashioned people in the country sometimes talk of sherry wine as if there was another kind of sherry which was not wine; and, though they are perhaps not aware of it, they are undoubtedly right in suggesting this distinction. There is a sherry—and it is this sherry which is usually sold and drunk in this country—which is not wine at all, but simply alcoholic poison. The true character of "curious old port" is now beginning to be pretty well understood, and the consumption of this remarkable liquor is rapidly declining; but the virtues of sherry are still a popular superstition. Many people who would be shocked at the idea of drinking spirits, and especially raw spirits, think nothing of a glass of sherry; yet, in the majority of cases, the sherry is only cheap bad brandy disguised as wine. At Blackburn, the other day, a man drank four gills of sherry, and died from the effects of the dose. This event has given rise to an interesting correspondence in the *Times* as to the adulteration of sherry, and also as to whether there is really such a thing as pure natural sherry in existence as an article of commerce. One writer, with the benevolent intention of making "the question clearer to that large portion of the public who enjoy a glass of sherry," and allaying "the nervous fears of moderate wine-drinkers," stated, as the result of many hundred tests which he had performed on the *mosto*, or young wine, in Spain, that 26 per cent. of proof-spirit is the average strength naturally generated in sherry. Upon this Mr. Denman, the wine-merchant, at once pointed out that the average strength of Spanish wines as first manufactured is only about 22 per cent.; but that the sherry of commerce is rarely, if ever, imported containing less than 38 to 40 per cent. of proof-spirit, and that, by the rule for fortifying wines, wine containing 22 per cent. requires 30 gallons per cent. of proof-spirit, and at 26 per cent. 23 gallons, to bring it up to 40 per cent. This was confirmed by Mr. W. Burton, who was formerly connected with the Custom House, and who stated, as the result of many thousand tests made in the London Custom House, that the average strength of sherry as

it is imported to this country and passed into consumption, is not less than 37 per cent. of proof-spirit, and some parcels contain as much as 46 and even 50 per cent. Therefore, taking the strength of sherry in its first stage at 26 degrees of proof-spirit, more than 18 per cent. of proof-spirit must have been added to bring the strength up to the lowest average of the imported wine. It can hardly be wondered at that, after such disclosures as these, the large portion of the public who enjoy a glass of sherry should become rather nervous; and indeed it is very desirable that they should become nervous, and should take fright in good time. A wine-merchant appears to think that he has settled the question by saying that we must distinguish between pure sherry as known in England and pure sherry as known in Spain, and that the latter would be unsaleable in England. Wine-merchants are certainly not bound to keep on sale what is unsaleable; but it does not follow that they are entitled to sell any sort of noxious drug which people are foolish enough to buy. —*Sat. Review.*

SENSIBLE TALK TO GIRLS.—Your every day toilet is a part of your character. A girl who looks like a "fury" or a sloven in the morning, is not to be trusted, however finely she may look in the evening. No matter how humble your room may be, there are eight things it should contain, viz: a mirror, washstand, soap, towel, hair, nail and tooth brushes. These are just as essential as your breakfast, before which you should make good use of them. Parents who fail to provide their children with such appliances, not only make a great mistake, but commit a sin of omission. Look tidy in the morning, and after the dinner work is over, improve your toilet. Make it a rule of your daily life to "dress up" for the afternoon. Your dress may, or need not be, anything better than calico, but with a ribbon, or flower, or some bit of ornament, you can have an air of self-respect and satisfaction that invariably comes with being well dressed. A girl with fine sensibilities cannot help feeling embarrassed and awkward in a ragged, dirty dress, with her hair unkempt, if a stranger or neighbor should come. Moreover, your self-respect should demand the decent apparelling for your body. You should make it a point to look as well as you can, even if you know nobody will see you but yourself.

In the *Spectator*, under the head of "Poetry," there appeared last week some verses purporting to be an "Epitaph on a distinguished Political Character." The epitaph, the "poet" takes care to inform us, is upon Mr. Disraeli. The lines commence—

"Here lies poor Dizzy,
In life so busy."

The conclusion is in the finest style of the author—

"When Dizzy died
Nobody cried;
And there's nobody weeping
Where Dizzy lies sleeping."

A PREACHER asked a woman if her husband feared the Lord. "Fear the Lord!" she replied; "you can gamble on that; why, bless you, he's that feared of him that he never goes out of the house Sundays without takin' his gun along."

CAISSA'S CASKET.

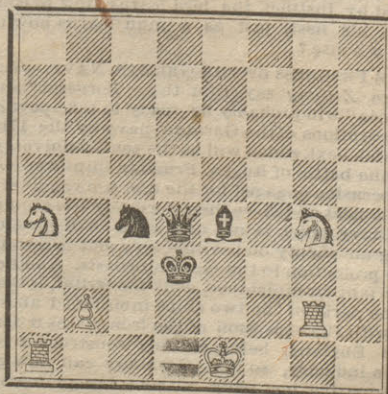
SATURDAY, Jan. 10th, 1874.

All communications relating to Chess must be addressed "CHECKMATE, London, Ont."

PROBLEM No. 35.

BY F. W. MARTINDALE.

BLACK.



WHITE.

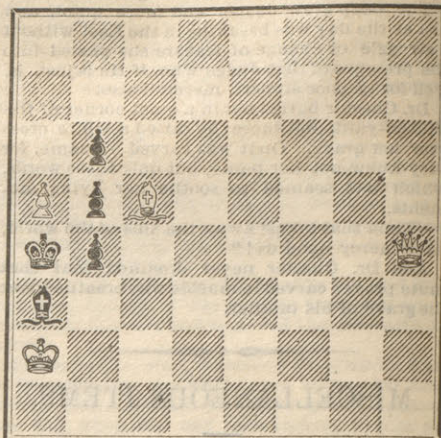
White to play and self-mate in two moves.

PROBLEM No. 36.

BY W. A. SHINKMAN.

Respectfully inscribed to Mr. Thos. D.S. Moore.

BLACK.



WHITE.

White to play and mate in three moves.

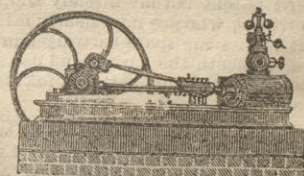
CHECK-MATE.

BY PHANIA.

Sitting in the gloaming
Sweet, my love and I,
O'er the polished chess board,—
No intruders nigh—
Carelessly in chatting
Pass the time away;
Much more to our liking,
Than in solemn play.

Sitting in the gloaming,
Sweet my love and I,
O'er the mingling chess-men,
Grown emboldened, I
Seize the dimpled fingers,
Hovering o'er the board,
And enraptured kisses
On their whiteness poured.

Sitting in the gloaming
Sweet, my love and I,
O'er the polished chess-board,—
No observers nigh,—
There I asked a question,
There I sought my fate,—
There I solved a problem,
There I found a MATE.



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